

AMBASSADOR MICHAEL H. NEWLIN

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

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Q: This is tape one, side one of an interview with Michael H. Newlin. This is being done by the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, and I am Charles Stuart Kennedy. Today is September 29, 2006. Do you go by Mike or Michael or what?

NEWLIN: Mike is fine, Stu.

Q: All right, let's start at the beginning. When and where were you born?

NEWLIN: I was born May 16, 1926 in Greensboro, North Carolina. I lived in Greensboro until I was approximately ten or eleven years old, and then we moved to a small town in North Carolina, Sanford, where my father was CEO of a small company that built railway motor cars. That, as we got closer to the war, it became clear that metal and other materials were hard to get. The stockholders sold the company while my father was in South America on a sales trip, and so he found himself basically without a job. But he had contacts because he had built one of the trains that was being used by the Panama Canal Railroad company. He was hired by the railroad company to come and work as a mechanic on one of the trains that he had built. So we moved to the Canal Zone, Balboa, shortly before Pearl Harbor, and I went to high school there.

Q: I want to go back a bit. Tell me what do you know about the background on let's say your father's family first?

NEWLIN: My middle name is Holt, and my great, great grandfather was at one time before the Civil War one of the richest men in North Carolina, Michael Holt in a place called Saxapahaw. Michael Holt had the idea of bringing the machine to the cotton rather than the cotton to the machine, and he built a dam on the Haw River and opened up one of the first mills there. Of course that was burnt and the dam blown up by Sherman during the Civil War.

Q: I hope you will appreciate the fact that my grandfather was an officer with Sherman.

NEWLIN: Well let it be said for the record that even though I have born a southerner, I am glad the Civil War came out the way it did. So the family basically, until my father came along, never recovered from this blow. His father, I think, worked on the railroad in an office job. As a young man, my father was working just simply as a mechanic building automobiles. It was rather new in those days, still in the roaring 20's. He was obviously very good as a mechanic. Then this company in Sanford needed somebody with skills, and he had both technical and the managerial skills to build these trains. They ran either on gasoline or diesel. But they ran on railroads, and they were very efficient. They filled a niche. He would go to South America and get an order for one, and come back and then build these trains, and then take them and assemble them. It was remarkable that this small company in North Carolina built world class products. One was built for the President of Argentina. He unfortunately died right after I graduated from high school in 1943. It was while I was in high school, and they said the deputy chief of mission at the embassy in Panama, Mr. John J. Muccio, will come over and talk to the class about the foreign service. That was how my interest in the foreign service got started.

Q: Well let's go back on your mother's side. What can you tell about your mother's side?

NEWLIN: My mother was born up in the hills of North Carolina in a place called Mount Airy at that time, very tiny little town. Then her father Mr. James Brady went to Greensboro and opened up a sort of boarding house cum hotel called the Blandwood in a very nice section of town. He was apparently a very successful businessman. Unfortunately he was murdered one night. He went down to try to get one of his employees out of the jail and somebody cut his throat and robbed him. My mother then lived with my grandmother in a house in Greensboro. My father happened to take a room in their house because there were just the two women living in this big house, and that is how they met.

Q: Did your mother go to college or not?

NEWLIN: My mother did go to college. She went to State College which was then a female institution. She did, I think have a college degree.

Q: What do you recall about Greensboro or Sanford in North Carolina?

NEWLIN: I do have some recollection of Greensboro, and it was very favorable. We were near, the place where we lived, Spring Garden Street, was near the state college for women at that time, and they had a training school to teach teachers. It was very well equipped. So I was enrolled in first grade, and the teacher then called my mother one day and said, "Mrs. Newlin, I am sorry to have to tell you this, but Mike cannot read." My mother thought my goodness, I have given birth to an idiot. She said, "I don't understand that. He seems like a bright enough boy." The teacher said, "Well have you been reading to him, Mrs. Newlin?" She said, "Yes. I read Pilgrim's Progress, Beowulf, and then some Greek myths." "Well that is probably it. He is too bored with Jack and Jill Went Up the Hill." I remember that fondly.

Q: At Sanford, where you moved. How about there. In the first place these two places in North Carolina, did you have, did segregation intrude on you at all to your knowledge or not?

NEWLIN: Well it was the typical situation at that time. My nanny in Greensboro was a black woman named Mamie. Mother said that when Mamie died she went right straight to heaven. One thing I remember as a boy in Greensboro during the depression was in the evenings quite often they would get a knock on the back door, and there would be a white man there saying, Ma'am, do you have some wood that needs splitting, I need something to eat. Well we didn't have any wood to split, but they gave him a meal.

Q: I remember we were in South Pasadena, California near the railroad tracks in the 30's. We would make sandwiches. Speaking of reading, did you find you were much of a reader as time went on?

NEWLIN: In grade school I read Dos Passos USA. As well as some other good books.

Q: Did you get caught up in any of the kid books, Tom Swift?

NEWLIN: Oh I read Dr. Doolittle. Lofting. Hugh Lofting. Mother didn't appreciate the literary qualities. She didn't know what it was all about. She said, "Well I hope you are going to finish that Dr. Doolittle book."

Q: Puddleby-on-the-Marsh. You were how old when you went to the Canal Zone?

NEWLIN: I must have been, let's see, I was in the first year of high school. I must have been, I was a freshman in high school, so I had four years to go, so I must have been about 12 or 13.

Q: Before you went there in elementary school, were there any subjects you particularly liked or that you didn't like, activities that you got involved in?

NEWLIN: I was always interested in music. I joined the glee club. A musical instrument company came to town trying to start a band, so I decided I wanted to play the snare drum. I wound up as a drummer in the band. I was not a great one for sports. I will have to say that.

Q: Tell me high school in the Canal Zone, the Canal Zone was of course a special place.

NEWLIN: It was a very special place.

Q: Could you talk particularly the time you were there, this would have been about '40 to 1944 or so?

NEWLIN: We got there in '40.

Q: Before the war started.

NEWLIN: Yes. Shortly after we got there, the war started.

Q: How would you describe life there, and then we will talk about school there.

NEWLIN: Heavenly. It was, I didn't realize at the time, it was strictly a colonial experience. You had these five miles on either side of the canal that was run by the United States. Everything was beautiful. You had a school, you had accredited teachers. They had just built a brand new high school when I got there. We had wonderful teachers. We had a symphony orchestra; we had a glee club. We had band. Then the teachers were just excellent. You crossed the Fourth of July Avenue over into Panama City, and you were in Central America. The government was wise enough to tell the Panamanians that they would take care of picking up the garbage and trash in Panama City and in Colon on the Atlantic side. We had no real mosquitoes anywhere. It was very interesting.

Q: Did you learn Spanish?

NEWLIN: A little bit. Not as much as I should have, but everybody just about that we came into contact with spoke English. An interesting thing how time changes. In Panama there were something called beer halls that were really very nice night clubs. We as teenagers would go over there with our dates, and we would all have Canadian Club and ginger ale or rum and coke. Nobody ever got drunk, and parents thought this was just a natural part of growing up.

Q: Well were there any Panamanian kids in the high school?

NEWLIN: Very few. There were a few. I had one very good Panamanian friend.

Q: You were there during the war. Did you feel there were a lot of military restrictions?

NEWLIN: We had blackouts, and we all built bomb shelters in our back yards. One of the first things I remember after Pearl Harbor, they gave us lumber, and I helped build. They were sort of a hut kind of thing with benches inside and then with earth on the top and sides. Whether these would have done any good or not I'm not sure, but at any rate we had them. But we did have blackouts, with windows closed at nights.

Q: Did you get a feel for the American Navy? I imagine you were seeing lots of ships go by.

NEWLIN: Yes we did. We had some visitors frequently from one of the cruisers that used to cruise in the Pacific. They were friendly, and they would sometimes take me with them over to Panama to the sort of more adult night clubs which for a teenager was quite a revelation.

Q: How about particularly in war time there must have been a lot of navy going through on the ships. Did they sort of intrude or were they literally ships that pass in the night?

NEWLIN: They would just mainly go through. I do remember that I worked after my father died, I worked for a year in the mechanical division which was right in Balboa Harbor sticking out into the harbor. I remember seeing the Roosevelt aircraft carrier steam in after it had been bombed with the flight deck cantilevered up. They did some emergency repairs. It was astounding that a carrier could take a bomb on its flight deck and still sail.

Q: When your father died, what happened?

NEWLIN: Well the Panama Canal Company was very good in that sense. They hired my mother in sort of a clerk type job, so she worked there for a number of years, while my two sisters, one of them two years younger, one of them five years younger, completed high school. They then went back to North Carolina. The girls went on to college and she went to work as a receptionist in Raleigh, North Carolina at a hospital. Mother worked throughout most of her life. She loved work, and so she was a house mother at Roanoke College in Virginia at one time, and she died at the age of 93.

Q: Well tell me now, you are getting ready to graduate in 1944. The war is on, what is going to happen to Michael Newlin?

NEWLIN: Well we were getting ready to graduate in '44. The president of our class was a charismatic type that I had never come across anything like him in our age group. The first of our class meetings that I attended, here was this godlike creature saying things like, the chair recognizes so and so and dominating the proceedings. This was Bob Whitham. So Whitham went off and signed up as a cadet midshipman in the Merchant Marine Academy. He did that before graduation because he wanted to be sure to get also a commission in the Naval Reserve and not be drafted into the army. So at his advice, since I admired him as a role model, before graduation I signed up and went off to Pass Christian and Biloxi to the Merchant Marine Academy there.

Q: Did they have two of them or something? I thought there was Kings Point?

NEWLIN: Kings Point is up in New York. I attended a basic school in Mississippi. I think we were in Pass Christian. I believe you were supposed to do one year or two years down there, and then go on to Kings Point.

Q: So what did you decide?

NEWLIN: Well I was there only a relatively short amount of time, and I got a severe ear infection and perforated ear drums, so I went back to the Canal Zone. That would have been in the summer of '44. Then my father died later on that fall. I had to drop out of the junior college, and I went to work in the mechanical division. I worked all the overtime I could. I was a drill press operator. At the end of the year I had saved \$1,000. So I wanted to go to college. I applied to Harvard, and they accepted me. And with \$1,000 in my pocket I went off to Cambridge, Massachusetts. Then I worked my way through college with scholarships and worked part time for the university. I graduated cum laude in '49. I knew by that time I really wanted to go into the foreign service. I seem to remember tuition, room and board was \$1,500.

Q: I would like to go back. Let's talk about Harvard first. You got to Harvard starting in about '45?

NEWLIN: Yes, '45.

Q: How did you find Harvard when you got there, I mean the veterans hadn't started to come back yet.

NEWLIN: They were starting to come back, but still the ROTC was marching up and down Harvard Yard and that kind of thing. There were a lot of military present. I guess the reason I got in was I was one of the few eligible males. I would never get into Harvard today. At any rate I got in, and that was because President Conant and Buck, the dean, wanted to, and I think it started before Conant, they wanted to get outside the elite New England prep schools. So they wanted some people that they thought might have some future from outside New England.

Q: What house were you in?

NEWLIN: Leverett House in a beautiful room overlooking the Charles River. Harvard has the house system similar to colleges at Oxford where you live, eat and interact with classmates. They too contribute to one's education. As I say because I wanted, I didn't know whether I would get into the foreign service or if I got in I didn't know whether I would like the foreign service, so I said I want a second string to my bow. So I went to my faculty advisor and said, "This is my problem. I don't know whether I want to apply to the law school or whether I want to apply to the business school." He looked at me and said, "Young man, which ever one you go to, you will never be hungered." I chose then the business school because that was two years rather than three years. There the tuition by that time had gone up. Even though I continued to work over in the college, I still had to take out a student loan. But for what they have to take out now days it wasn't anything like that.

Q: Talking about when you were at Harvard. What were you majoring in?

NEWLIN: I majored in government with a second in economics.

Q: With government, what does this mean?

NEWLIN: It is really political science. We were so fortunate to have Merle Fainsod, who had of course worked in the government during the war. His tales about how government really works rather than what you were getting in the textbook was priceless.

Q: I would imagine you were getting did you feel you were getting a good dose of international interest and all that?

NEWLIN: Oh yes, everything. Everything that was going on. I think it was the first year I was there at graduation they presented honorary degrees to the joint chiefs. They had Eisenhower and all the other joint chiefs. It was a strong, and as you say the veterans started coming back then. I was very interested. They were all in the same house and everything, so over lunch or dinner to talk about their experiences.

Q: Well it was much more, I went to Williams as a non veteran from '46 to '50. I have very much the same thing. In a way I absorbed the maturity of the veterans by being around them.

NEWLIN: That is right. One of the veterans I got to know. He was in the jungles of I guess Okinawa I suppose, and I said to him, "Gee that must have been really awful. The Japanese were so fanatical and fight to the last man. Wasn't that hard to cope with?" He said, "Well we were better scrappers."

Q: What, how about some of your professors? Did any stick in your mind now?

NEWLIN: Yes indeed. I was sort of in a way adopted by one of the professors, Professor Kemp. He was a bachelor who lived with another bachelor, Derwwod Stainthorpe Whittlesley, who was a writer on the whole international political thing. They used to invite younger people for dinner occasionally and everything. He just sort of became in loco parentis. Fortunately when they made a trip to Europe, they asked me to go along as their chauffeur. That is something when we get to that point helped me get into the foreign service.

Q: Well were you there in '48 when Marshall made his speech that kicked off the Marshall Plan?

NEWLIN: Yes I was.

Q: Well you must have felt very much in the center of, I mean obviously the events of the reconstruction of Europe, the menace of communists and all must have been playing itself out.

NEWLIN: All of the stories then began to emerge about the holocaust as well. And then of course, for somebody with my background, the cultural life of Boston was incredible. Here I was out of Panama out of Balboa Canal Zone, the Metropolitan Opera came to town that fall. I had just arrived too. Somebody said, "The Met said they could use some extras. Does anybody want to sign up?" I said, "Yeah I will sign up for as many as I can do." I found myself then on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera in Aida, Carmen and Lakmë½. Lilly Pons was right there singing. That was a great adventure.

Q: Was there, did you get involved in some of the student affairs. It was quite an active time you were having for students. It was the National Student Association or whatever it was at the UN and international, you were there. It was a new world.

NEWLIN: Oh yes. It was a new world. The UN had just gotten started. Of course we students read the New York Times avidly and had bull sessions. I tried out for the Harvard Crimson, but I just found out I didn't have time to do the Harvard Crimson and then do my studies and then work too.

Q: How did you find the studies coming out of the life in the Canal Zone? It was a good high school. Did you find yourself having to catch up or did you find yourself with your classmates fairly...

NEWLIN: Fairly. The quality I was very impressed. I had no problem at all. We had excellent professors. I really enjoyed it.

Q: What sort of work were you doing for the University?

NEWLIN: Well Roy Atherton was the librarian in our house library. Each house had a beautiful library. When he graduated, left, he said, "Would you like to take over as house librarian?" So I took over as the house librarian. Before I did that I worked in Widner Library in the stacks making sure the books were all in their right place. I did that not only for most of my undergraduate years but for the two years I was over at the business school.

Q: Well then you graduated in '49. So what did attract you to the foreign service, the idea that this is...

NEWLIN: Well this goes back to the Muccio briefing. So much was going on in the post war world at that time. The Cold War, the Iron Curtain, NATO being created, the UN being created and all of this. So that really was my first interest.

Q: Well we want to point out too that you and myself and others sort of picking that New England boiling pot call it, were exposed to the world because we had the New York Times. These were subject to debate. It was a very international environment as opposed to somebody who maybe was coming from the Midwest. They might have gotten it, but could have just as easily not gotten it. Was there any equivalent to the campus communist groups and all. Were they going?

NEWLIN: There were. In the stairwells some evenings there was a group in Leverett House. I didn't identify with them. They would sing the Internationale which ended with "Freiheit" (Freedom). So I didn't know who they were, and certainly nobody tried to proselytize me.

Q: Well then when you moved over to the business school. What was the name of the business school?

NEWLIN: Baker. The Baker School.

Q: What sort of courses were you taking there?

NEWLIN: Well there was a core course that you had to take. You could elect if you wanted to specialize. I suppose I was just interested mainly in general management courses. I did take a special course in government relations. I did not want to specialize in finance or something like that. But it was a wonderful training session because we lived in sort of a suite, three two-person bedrooms with a common room. We were each given an assignment on a Thursday evening, or maybe sometimes even on a Friday. You had to then write a report as if you were in a business dealing with this. Then you had to turn it in by a certain time on Saturday evening. If you didn't turn it in on a certain time, they had removed the container under where you put it in and you could hear the assignment hit the floor. You knew that you were going to be penalized because you didn't get it there on time. That turned out to be a very useful experience in the foreign service because you did have to interact with all of your colleagues and then you were responsible for a typed report that had to be delivered by a certain time.

Q: They used the case method then.

NEWLIN: Used the case method. Joseph R. Kennedy came and addressed us as well as other business leaders.

Q: How was he viewed at the time?

NEWLIN: Well, I don't think we knew too much about him at that time. We didn't really realize how much he was taken in by Hitler and that kind of thing. But I remember him starting off by saying "My generation has made a mess of things, and so you have got a mess to contend with." It turned out the implication of that was I have got some sons that have lived abroad, been in embassies. They will be able to help out here.

Q: Did the business world intrigue you at all?

NEWLIN: I am glad you asked that question. The other thing that was so useful to me was I had to get some job during the summer. So I went over to the student employment office and said, "I want to sign up for a summer job." So they gave me a list of possibilities. One of them was tutor companion. So I thought I will find out about that. So the person that was interviewing me was the person named William A. M. Burden. I don't know if you have ever heard of William A. M. Burden. He came, his mother was a Vanderbilt and came from a very wealthy family in New York. They hired me to be a tutor for their son who was about eight or nine then. They had four sons by my special one was middle. They had just built a fantastic home in Northeast Harbor in Maine, designed by the man who designed Rockefeller Center. It was shaped like a wave. The ceiling and everything. The dining table was done by Isamu Noguchi the sculptor, a huge thing like a ship. So all of a sudden from being a poor boy, I was transformed into this thing. So I worked for them for two summers. It said in the things, "Now don't kind yourself. Jobs of tutor companion, getting a trip to Europe is extremely rare." Well the second year they decided to go to Europe. Crossed over, Queen Mary first class, everything. Went to Paris and went to London. So that was my introduction to Europe.

Q: How did you find being a tutor companion to an eight year old boy. Isn't it difficult?

NEWLIN: It wasn't with Hamilton. He was what they call a nerd now. He was fascinated by the Civil War, and so he wanted to read and everything. I would take him around to the battlefields in the Shenandoah and everything.

Q: You mentioned you went as a chauffeur with some of your professors. How did that work out?

NEWLIN: That was the second year after I graduated. They wanted me to come back again. I said, "Well I just couldn't." that really was my, because both of them were geographers. Subsequently after them they abolished the geography department per se. But then we made a trip all through Europe. We started in the Low Countries, drove all through France, all through Italy, then that was it.

Q: Well we are talking about a Europe that was still pretty well devastated.

NEWLIN: It was. More so the first rip that I made with the Burdens. I remember when we got off at Cherbourg, I went around, while the rest of them were finishing their lunch I went around and walked around town. There were large stacks of coffins of soldiers still waiting to be repatriated. Then Paris, they had sort of blackouts at night when most lights were either turned off or very dim.

Q: That was coal, the lack of...

NEWLIN: That is right.

Q: Not because of war but because of post war economic problems.

NEWLIN: Yes, most Western European countries faced severe problems in the immediate post war period. West Germany was still occupied and had not yet become a major economic factor.

Of course when we got to England, they were still on rations. Ordinary Britons could not obtain foreign exchange so I had no problem selling the French francs I had left over from Paris.

Q: Rations lasted in England I think until 1953...

NEWLIN: I know.

Q: Well did this getting over to Europe whet your appetite some more or not?

NEWLIN: Yes it did. I remember the ship got near Cherbourg at night and everything I remember looking out the port hole and seeing the lights of all the little. Soon I will be in Europe. Then one of the places we went was Alto Adige which was part of Austria but after the World War Italy had been on our side, and it was turned over to Italy. Then I noticed that they were trying to Italianize this completely German speaking town. I remember the Carboniere, there was one blond, blue eyed Carboniere, and the other one was obviously very swarthy from down near the toe of Italy.

Q: I graduated from college and all of a sudden I thought, who the hell would ever listen to a guy like me tell them where to invest their money you know. But anyway, you graduated I guess in '51?

NEWLIN: Yes. I graduated with the class of '51.

Q: What happened?

NEWLIN: Well between sessions I took the foreign service exam in the fall of or the summer, I guess the fall of '50.

Q: This is the 3 ½ day exam wasn't it?

NEWLIN: Yes, the written exam. I came down, no I took it in Boston I am sure. Of course you had to wait and wait and the process started. Then I was finally told I guess about a year later, no then I was called a year later for the oral exam. I passed the oral exam. Then at that time I was working as a civilian employee for the Department of Defense in the air targets division down at 12th and Constitution in a temporary building. I worked there until my security clearance came through.

Q: Did you recall any of the questions on the oral exam?

NEWLIN: Yes. I had taken the precaution the summer before I took it they had a course at George Washington to prepare people for it. They said, "Now one thing they are keen on is your knowledge of American geography. So be prepared to be able to name the states on either side of the Mississippi River." I thought that is a good thing, so boy could I name the states on either side of the Mississippi River, going up, coming down. So in the middle of the oral exam they said, " Mr. Newlin, could you name the states on either side of the Mississippi River." I said, "Let's see now. Well there is Louisiana, and then there is Mississippi." I had it down pat and that gave me a certain confidence.

Q: Did you find they asked any sort of substantive questions about American foreign policy or anything like that?

NEWLIN: They didn't ask me anything on foreign policy.

Q: So you took the oral exam, where were you? Had you graduated from business school yet or not?

NEWLIN: I guess I had.

Q: Did you find a job? What were you doing?

NEWLIN: Well then through happenstance I had met somebody, and they said the Department of the Air Force is looking for people. This is a job of preparing maps for possible bombardment in the Soviet Union. They had from the Germans this great pile of photographs of sites in there. So I did that for awhile until my appointment came through.

Q: When did you come into the foreign service?

NEWLIN: I came into the foreign service on October 12, 1952. Just before our class graduated they said Secretary Acheson would like to receive your class. So that was one of the great thrills of our lives. This was just before the administration changed, so he said this is the last class of the foreign service in the Truman administration. It turned out because of the McCarthy period and the new administration the foreign service didn't take anybody in for a couple of years.

Q: I know because I came in in July of 1955, and our class was class one. Because of the hiatus. You were the last class. We started the cycle and it kept on. They changed the numbering but basically it kept going on. What was your class like, the people in it and sort of the atmosphere?

NEWLIN: Very diverse type geographically. We had just two women in our class. We all got along very well together. I think we learned from each other. We tried to keep in touch, but all of us now are elderly and some are not in good health. But we used to have occasional reunions.

Q: How about the women; do you know what happened to them, because this is the era where when a woman got married she had to resign.

NEWLIN: It is what happened to one of them I think. She was later re-instated. Then there was another one that was a lawyer from Louisiana. Bless her heart, she was, I thought she was a real character, but she wasn't suited for the foreign service, so she was eventually I think sort of eased out.

Q: Can you think of some of the careers of some of your foreign service class?

NEWLIN: Well one of the members of our foreign service class happened to be James Goodby.

Q: Yes, very much involved with disarmament matters.

NEWLIN: And nuclear matters. He I think either resigned or took leave of absence from the foreign service to go with the Atomic Energy Commission at one time. I thought we would never see him again. Then Goodby will come back later on in our interview.

Q: Well as you came in did you have any idea where you want to go, and how did you play that?

NEWLIN: I wanted to go to Europe because I thought that was what my main interest was. So I put that down as my first choice. Mrs. Burden gave a luncheon and Cecil Lyon was there. He was then head of our mission in Berlin, at least the Department of State end. So Cecil Lyon asked me would I like to come to Berlin? I said, "Yes I would live to come to Berlin." When I got to Germany and got off the plane in Frankfurt, they said, "You will report to HIGHCOG in Bonn, and they will determine where you will be assigned." The Department had assigned me to Munich. Then Cecil Lyon came along and said, "Would you like to come to Berlin," and that he would arrange that. So I was all keyed to go either to Berlin or Munich. I said to the consul general in Frankfurt, "My assignment is in Munich." They said, "No it is not. You are going to Bonn and you meet with the personnel people there and they will determine where you will go." So I got off the train and went up to HIGHCOG. They said, "You are assigned to Frankfurt. Get on the train and go back to Frankfurt." That turned out to be a very fortunate thing.

Q: You were in Frankfurt from when to when?

NEWLIN: I was there for two years. I guess it was '53 to '55. I was a rotation officer so I rotated through various things. I did economic work for awhile. I did administrative work. Then I did non immigrant visas and Immigrant visas. While I was there I met my future wife. So that turned out to be a very fortuitous assignment.

Q: How did you find work in Frankfurt? By the way were you in the new building?

NEWLIN: Oh no, we were in Bockenheimer Anlage. It was an old high rise apartment building that had been reconstructed. We looked out on the old city walls. I would go out at lunch time and walk around. The entire center of Frankfurt you could just see for blocks and blocks, all the way down to the cathedral. Just about everything had been completely bombed. The Germans had cleaned the stones and stacked them up neatly where the former buildings were. The old medieval center where Goethe's house used to be was completely destroyed.

Q: They did a very good job of rebuilding that. I got there, I was in the Air Force at Darmstadt about the time you were there. I took the foreign service exam. Ended up at ICOG at EG Farben.

NEWLIN: E.K. Hochhaus (skyscraper).

Q: I remember the man who monitored the 3 ½ days was Kennedy Schmertz. Was he, I think he was there while you were there. What sort of visas, who were the people, these were non immigrant visas.

NEWLIN: I remember one applicant from the Rhineland. He looked somewhat like you. He had more of a white beard. Looked a little bit like Santa Claus, and he had filled out all the forms and sworn to their truth. We had access fortunately to something called the Berlin document center which contained the names of Nazi members. Not only his name came up but they had a picture of him. There he was in uniform of the Waffen SS with the scull and cross bones cap. He turned out to be the leader of a band. Even the Waffen SS had bands. I said, "You were never a Nazi." "Nein." "You had nothing to do with the military." "Nein." I said, "Well how do you explain this?" handing him the picture. He said, "Where on earth did you get that?"

Then one day there was a great commotion. Each applicant had to wait their turn in the outer office. Then one day the receptionist who was a young and very efficient German came in and said, "Baroness Von Bothmer is outside and waiting to talk to you." I said, "Well tell her to wait her turn. I will see her." He said, "Okay." Then this lady came in dressed in a sable coat, and she had as much jewelry as I have ever seen on anyone. She had been born in Ozark, Arkansas in the 30's, and had gone to New York and gotten a job as a secretary in the German consulate general in New York where she met Baron Von Bothmer. He proposed to her, and they got married. So in those days if an American woman married a foreigner, she lost her American citizenship and took her husband's. In the late 1930's he was called back to Berlin, and they took the Trans Siberian Railroad. They were both horrified at communism and what they saw in Russia. During WWII, she made some broadcasts in English telling about the horrors of communism. So when she applied earlier for a visa to go back to the States to visit her relatives, her wartime broadcasts came up. The Department's guidance was sought. So I got her file and it said that the Department determined that she had been a foreign national doing this, and therefore there was no reason to deny her a visa. She said, "Oh you must come down to the Bodensee." I never went.

Q: Did you get any feel for this while you were in Germany about the Germans and the attitudes of the Germans at that point?

NEWLIN: I did not except once when I was having to have my car repaired. The owner of the shop when I went to pick the car up, lectured me on how he wished that the United States was dropping the atomic bomb on Russia.

Q: Well of course, you probably ran across the phenomenon that not a single German you met ever fought on the west front. They all fought on the eastern front.

NEWLIN: That's right. Nobody ever would admit shooting at or killing an American.

Q: Did you ever get up to Berlin?

NEWLIN: Yes, I got up to Berlin a couple of times. You had to get special permission from HICOG. When you got to the Russian checkpoint when you were driving the documents were stamped by the Russians. I did get to Berlin a couple of times. In spite of everything it certainly had the feel of a big capital even in its truncated form.

Q: Was there the feeling at the time that the war could start at any moment?

NEWLIN: Yes, there was a fear of that. U.S. forces held well publicized maneuvers. There were tensions all the time. You just never knew what kind of a crisis would come up. In the Eisenhower administration we had several trips to the brink.

Q: When did you get there to Germany?

NEWLIN: I got there in '53 I think it was. The end of '52.

Q: Because I was wondering were you there when there were riots in East Berlin? This was quite a serious...

NEWLIN: That was I think later.

Q: Well let's see, it was before, it was in '53 or '54. I remember because I was at Darmstadt, and all of a sudden we were confined to barracks. I was in the Air Force at the time as an enlisted man. It looked quite serious.

Tell me about your wife. What was her background, and how did you meet her?

NEWLIN: My wife was born near Prague, and she was at the university when the Germans marched in in '39. They closed the university. In her spare time in the winter, she started teaching herself English, got textbooks and a dictionary, sat on the floor in her mother's room and started teaching herself English. After the war, in that interim period, she went back to Charles University and was studying law. When the communist coup came in '48, the students were required to join the communist student union, and she refused. She had to leave the university. Her father was in ill health by then and she needed a job desperately, but no one wanted to hire her because she had refused to join a communist organization. Somebody said, "Why don't you go and see Martin Bow." He was the American head of the allied permit office. This was an office set up that had Americans, British and French officials to process Sudeten Germans going to Germany. So Milena met Martin Bow. She was shocked that he interviewed her with his feet up on the desk. He asked all sorts of questions and examined her documents. Finally he said, "Well we don't have anything." She said, "I am so sorry, I was so hoping." As she gathered up her papers he said, "Can you start on Monday?" So she worked for the allied permit office and felt sorry for the Sudeten Germans who had to immigrate. Then the communist government in 1950 started harassing the Czech employees of western embassies including the allied permit office. It became very difficult and they didn't know what would happen. She and two other girls walked across the Iron Curtain in February in the snow, carrying a little suitcase, managed to make it over to the West German side. She said, when somebody said, "Halt!", she was so relieved that she had gotten there. At first she had a very difficult time because she was in effect a refugee and the Germans had their hands full with all of their refugees. But Lawrence Steinhardt, our ambassador in Prague, contacted High commissioner McCloy in Bonn and said, "Look, some of my employees feel that they have to leave. If they manage to get out and they come to you, you send me their names I will see if I can vouch for them." That is what happened. While waiting for the Prague embassy's clearance she worked for a British refugee agency in their zone where she was so poorly paid she developed malnutrition. Finally she got word that she should report to the American consulate general in Frankfurt, and she was working there whenever I got there.

Q: In Frankfurt.

NEWLIN: In Frankfurt.

Q: Where was she working?

NEWLIN: She was working in the unclassified file room. So then we got engaged just as my two years were up. Then new FSOs were transferred after two years, so then my two years were coming to an end. I had to apply to the Secretary of State for permission to marry a non American citizen. I doubt whether it is the same drill to day as it was then. You wrote one letter saying I request permission to marry a non American citizen and give the particulars. The second letter said, "Dear Mr. Secretary, I hereby resign from the American Foreign Service as of such and such a date." Both were sent to the Department. I went away to Oslo in December '54 for my second post. Milena who had been waiting for her immigrant visa immigrated to the States at the same time as I left Frankfurt. She got a job at the American Geophysical Union. So in November, '55 we got word from the State Department that permission had been granted. That was at the height of the McCarthy period and I made contingency plans in case the decision was negative. I gave the State Department credit that they would clear her but they took account that she had been a refugee from communism.

Q: While you were in Frankfurt did you get any emanations from the McCarthy period.

NEWLIN: Of course, Cohn and Schine.

Q: Cohn and Schine, could you talk about who they were and whatever else you can.

NEWLIN: Of course Roy Cohn, I guess had worked with, didn't he also work with...

Q: Robert Kennedy also worked on the McCarthy staff.

NEWLIN: Bobby Kennedy, that's right. He worked there.

Q: They were two nasty characters.

NEWLIN: Cohn apparently brilliant but as nasty as they come. Then he hooked up with Schine whose father owned a hotel chain. They came to Bonn and they were trying to root out alleged communists in the foreign service posts. One of the people I think it was at the embassy in Bonn called them junketeering gumshoes. A nasty bunch indeed.

It was just the most terrible time in our modern history. It was a shame that Eisenhower and Dulles and Senator Taft too tolerated McCarthy and his staff. Somebody said to Taft, "Well this is just ruining our reputation abroad. You shouldn't allow this." He said, "Well, they are hurting the Democrats."

Q: They were running through the USIA (United States Information Agency) libraries abroad taking out books. I don't think these two knew what they were doing. They looked at the titles. But I mean they were sort of saying USIA was passing out communist propaganda. You shouldn't have this book. Of course in a place like Germany where books had been burned. These were two American Jews who were out censoring.

NEWLIN: Unbelievable, disgraceful.

Q: It didn't sit well. Did you pick up anything else. I am just trying to get some of the atmospherics, both when you were earlier in Washington taking the course, and while you were in Frankfurt about the McCarthy period and you know, sort of the feeling of a purge that was going on, or were you too low down. Did you run across anybody?

NEWLIN: No. We heard about the people who were fired or forced to resign. It made you feel that the State Department and the foreign service particularly were going through a very difficult time. Then there was the whole thing about who lost China. And the old China hands being fired. But at that time we were all just so new and everything.

Q: I recall I was in Frankfurt, duty officer sitting in the front lobby of the new consulate on a Saturday. McCarthy had just died. An American Army officer came in and said, "Why isn't your flag at half mast?" I looked at him and said, "We hadn't been ordered," and muttered under my breath, "If we had another ten feet more I would hoist it higher." This is by the time of course he had been thoroughly discredited. But it was a very difficult time that I think for many people today is just ancient history.

NEWLIN: Ancient history. They don't talk about the McCarthy period.

Q: There are still whiffs of it from time to time. So you are off to Oslo.

NEWLIN: Off to Oslo.

Q: I am thinking this might be a good place to stop.

NEWLIN: Yes, I think so.

Q: We will pick this up, you get to Oslo in...

NEWLIN: I got to Oslo in the beginning of 1955. Christmas of '54.

Q: All right, we will pick that up, and you are getting ready to get married too.

NEWLIN: That is right; that comes then.

Q: OK, today is 10 October 2006. Mike, 1955, in the first place you are getting married. Here is the flashback about your early time. You were saying, go ahead.

NEWLIN: My I guess he was my great grandfather, Michael Holt was a man at a town in North Carolina, Saxphall, built a dam and one of the very first mills to produce fabric in the south. His daughter was my paternal grandmother, Anna Fixe Newlin. She was a young girl at the time of the Civil War. I remember talking to her when I was a young boy in North Carolina about the Civil War. At that time there was no military activities in that part over there. It was all new getting started in 1861 I guess it was, '60-'61. I remember her saying she was disturbed because of the flag bearers, they young men looked as though they had the flag pole stuck in their navels, and that must have been. It wasn't until later they explained that that wasn't the situation. At the end of the war when your ancestor with Sherman showed up to blow up the dam and to burn down the mill, her mother sewed the gold coins that they had in a belt, and she wore them under her dress around her skirt. Fortunately the Union soldiers did not think to look there. So I remember that particular incident. The family mainly had at the end of the war, they mainly had confederate money which of course was immediately worthless. I did remember her talking about that. I would say, "Oh Grandmother, tell us about the Civil War.

Q: OK, I can't remember, you got married in 1955 was it?

NEWLIN: Yes. Got married in '55.

Q: Who was your wife? Did you talk about the background of your wife at all?

NEWLIN: I think we did. She was a Czech refugee. She was working at the American consulate general in Frankfurt. Then I had to apply for permission to get married, and fortunately the State Department agreed that I could get married.

Q: Well you went to Oslo in '55.

NEWLIN: I guess it must have been at the end of '54. I guess I was transferred there it was at the end of the year in '54. I got there basically at the beginning of '55.

Q: You were there until when?

NEWLIN: I was there for three years. I was there until '58.

Q: What was your job?

NEWLIN: Again it was sort of a rotational job. I started out in the visa section, non immigrant visas. Then I rotated into the administrative side for awhile. Then finally I got my wish and got into the political section for the last year and a half I was there.

Q: How would you describe Norway when you got there in '55?

NEWLIN: Well like most places Stu, Norway in '55 was entirely different from the Norway of today. They had not discovered oil then. Of course, they had been occupied by the Germans during the war. The cost of living was very high. You felt that you were in sort of a Nordic backwater. Certainly Oslo in those days couldn't in any sense compare with either Stockholm or Copenhagen.

Q: Who was the ambassador when you got there?

NEWLIN: When I got there it was L. Corrin Strong. His fortune came from the Eastman Kodak Company. He was a contributor to the Eisenhower campaigns, so he was a political appointee. A nicer, more congenial person you never met. His wife, Alice Strong, was also very nice. Mrs. Strong was very nice to my wife and told her, "Never change."

Q: Was there much flow back and forth between non-immigrant visas and immigrant visas to the United States, between Norway and the States?

NEWLIN: Yes I would say that we had a fairly brisk business.

Q: When you were there, were there still issues dealing with I guess you would call it the Quislings in Norway anyway, the collaborators and all that. Was that much of an issue when you were there?

NEWLIN: That was not. You are entirely right. There were Quislings. There were Nazi sympathizers, people that worked with the Germans during the occupation But that had apparently been pretty well dealt with. The chief, Quisling himself I think was hanged right after the war. We never had any problems of that kind.

Q: What about were there any issues when you were the political officer or even before, between the United States and Norway?

NEWLIN: No, I can't say that there were. Norway has a socialist government. I think there was an undercurrent of sort of pacifism. The Norwegians are the ones that decide the Nobel Peace Prize while the Swedes decide the others. I was the protocol officer among other things. So one of my duties was towards the end of the Eisenhower administration to take a nomination, I think it was from the Secretary of Agriculture over to the Nobel office proposing Eisenhower for the Nobel Peace Prize. Of course he didn't get it. I remember that was my introduction to one thing. They were glad to be out from under Nazi occupation but I don't that there was much of a sense that they were threatened by the cold war. But then before I got there, apparently the CIA or the State Department informed the Norwegians that they had information that the Soviet Union intended to invade the northern part where the common border is near the north cape. That then caused the Norwegians, their foreign minister Halvard Lange got them to join NATO. So they had joined NATO by the time I was there. But I remember while I was there, at an annual meeting of the labor party, all of a sudden without any warning, a group tabled a motion that nuclear weapons would not be allowed in Norway. This took the leadership completely by surprise, but they didn't want to have a floor fight on the thing even though they didn't agree with it. So the thing passed. You will recall that Gary Powers, whenever his documents were seized.

Q: We are talking about the U-2 incident.

NEWLIN: We are talking about the U-2 incident now. Gary Powers was shot down during the Eisenhower administration over Siberia and we put out a series of official statements saying this was a weather plane that got lost from Peshawar, Pakistan. Khrushchev went on TV and said it was an American spy plane, and we have the pilot Gary Powers, alive and kicking. I had to go up north while I was there to deal with some shipwrecked American seamen. One of the places where the plane stopped was Bodø. It is right on the Arctic Circle. I noticed that it was a very mountainous area. There was an airfield with an extraordinarily long runway. A fighter jet, it wasn't a U-2, but a fighter jet landed. Then the mountain opened and it went into an underground hangar. I thought well, that is very sophisticated. So I was not surprised whenever it came out that Gary Powers when captured had on his map that he was supposed to land in Bodø. Going forward a little bit, by then our Ambassador was Frances Willis, one of the first female ambassadors in the foreign service. So she was called to the foreign ministry to receive an official protest. Frances Willis said Oslo was the last place where she expected to be called on the carpet. The protest, of course, was for public consumption; the government and the military knew all about U-2 missions.

Q: Was there ever the feeling that you were picking up of the Norwegians that they felt under any particular threat because of their small size but they did have a border with the Soviet Union?

NEWLIN: They do have a border with the Soviet Union. It doesn't amount, Kirkenes in the north, there is this short border in Lapland. Norwegians were the object of Soviet Propaganda, because I remember every now and then it struck me, the Soviets must have supplied some of the newspapers with maps of Oslo showing circles what a nuclear strike on Oslo would do. The idea being to make the people frightened to be in NATO. On the other hand when it was 1956, when the Soviets invaded Hungary, there was a genuine reaction on the part of the citizens of Oslo against the Russians for this. There was actually a big demonstration down town. They marched to the Hungarian embassy and demonstrated in front of it. This was unheard of, anything like this happening in Norway.

Funnily enough, on the political side, the Chinese presented us with certain protocol problems. Strong had been there long enough that he became dean of the diplomatic corps. One of the things the dean had to do was occasionally to invite all of the heads of diplomatic missions to his residence, and they would discuss any problems. Well the Chinese communists were recognized and had an ambassador there. So we approached the State Department and said he has got to have this meeting. We see no option other than to invite the Chinese to come to the American ambassador's residence, because this is the way it is done here.. So the state department agonized over this and came back and said, "Well your role is to promote good relations with the Norwegians. Therefore for protocol reasons, you should invite them. So one of my duties, among the duties of a young foreign service officer, was to stand at the door, and when the Chinese ambassador and his entourage, I did not shake hands with them. I simply said welcome and then ushered them in. While I was there, King Haakon died. He was their first modern king. They were in the process of trying to create a Norwegian identity. He was born, I think in Windsor Castle. His name had originally been Charles, but he changed it to a Norwegian Haakon. During the war he and his family took refuge in the UK. When he died, the new king had to have a great big state funeral. After the funeral, the palace of course gave a luncheon for all of the dignitaries that were there. It turned out that Corrin Strong was seated next to the Chinese ambassador, and he took this very badly. He protested to the foreign ministry. "You know very well we don't have relations etc., etc." The Norwegians said, "According to protocol, Corrin was the dean, the Chinese was next and so on." That was royal protocol.

Q: They had a socialist government there, the Eisenhower administration which was moderately right wing Republican. Was there a certain disconnect? Were we comfortable with what was happening there?

NEWLIN: I mean during the cold war, where ever you were, the cold war was dominating. I think we were comfortable with the socialist government, and the socialist government was glad to have the United States and the protection NATO provided.

Q: Did you have any feel, granted your topic should come from Germany, with the German-Norwegian connection? This wasn't that long after the war.

NEWLIN: I must say this sounds incredible, but the Germans who had been there as soldiers would come back to Norway on vacation. They would go to the houses that they had occupied. The owners had been kicked out. They would knock on the door and say, "I was a German soldier and I lived here during the war." Well this was not received very well.

Q: By any chance, I don't know if he was the mayor of Berlin. Did Willy Brandt go back there at all? Because I think during World War I wasn't he raised, didn't he go over to Norway?

NEWLIN: I think he had a Norwegian background of some kind, but he did not come there while I was there.

Q: Did the Soviet embassy play much of a role as far as you were concerned?

NEWLIN: No, I don't remember that the Soviets did play very much of a role. They kept sort of low key as far as I could tell.

Q: The Soviets at that time, were they sending submarines up the fjords, and was this a problem?

NEWLIN: Not that I am aware of. I don't remember any problems of that kind.

Q: How about did you get any feel for the relationship between Norway and Sweden either through the embassy...

NEWLIN: Oh well as usual you know, they had been under the Swedes for a long time. At one time they were under the Swedes or they were under the Danes. The problems were in the summertime, the Swedes would all drive over to see the fjords and the Norwegians resented the fact that they would bring all of their food and beverages with them. They called them the cheap Swedish tourists. There was not any love lost there.

Q: What was the political situation. I mean you were the political officer. What kind of stuff were you doing?

NEWLIN: Well we were reporting on their various activities. There was sort of a peace movement. Oh who was the famous man that was an organist he was in Africa?

Q: Albert Schweitzer.

NEWLIN: Albert Schweitzer had sort of a peace movement that came along. People were supposed to sign up for his program. It was sort of a peace at any price kind of thing. One thing we had to do was report as to how many Norwegians were supporting Schweitzer and his peace program. Linus Pauling, the famous American Nobel prize winner and also a pacifist came to Norway. One thing I had to do was go listen to his lecture. He was a very congenial person. He wasn't sort of a raging person at all. These were the two pacifist movements which did have a certain amount of public support.

Q: How was life in Norway? How did you and your wife enjoy it?

NEWLIN: We enjoyed it mainly because of the Norwegians, because they were so friendly. I can say that it was a very nice post.

Q: Did you get to travel around much?

NEWLIN: We did. We took a boat and went all the way up to the north cape, all the way up to Kirkeness and saw the whole thing. We would then go up to the fjord country. We tried to learn to ski. I was not a very good skier. We had good Norwegian friends. We really enjoyed the spectacular country.

Q: Well then in 1958, whither?

NEWLIN: In 1958, as I said, we got married in '55. My wife, Milena, came to Norway and was with me for the last two years. In '58 we were transferred to the State Department. The idea being that since I had married a foreign national, that we should be in Washington so that my wife could become more Americanized. So Frances Willis, then the career ambassador, she wanted me, I found out later, I didn't know, she wanted me to be assigned as the Norwegian desk officer. But the European bureau had their own candidate so that didn't happen. But because she had made the request, I was assigned as a political officer to the Bureau of International Organizations. The office was called UNP (United Nations Political Affairs). The heads of the office were William Cargo and Joseph John Sisco. That turned out to be a very interesting place to be at that time.

Q: Before I get to that, you mentioned that the parliament had passed the no nuclear weapons in Norway. Did that...

NEWLIN: That wasn't the parliament. That was a Labor Party Congress. I might not have made that clear. However, since the government was socialist it had the effect of law. Oh well there were the sensitivities, I am glad you mentioned that. The political section could have good access to practically all of the senior people in the labor movement, the Labor Party. One of my colleagues asked for one of his Norwegian friends, "Can I come and just sit in on the Congress to really see how these things go?" The friend said, "Yeah, come on." Then some of the delegates, I guess they were not friendly toward the United States, made a big issue in the newspapers. One headline said the Americans wish to censor Norwegian politics. They tried to send a political officer to participate in our Labor Party congress. So this was something of an embarrassment.

Q: Well then we will move back. It became a United Nations affair. You were doing that from '58 until when?

NEWLIN: I did that from '58 until '63.

Q: That is a good five years. Well first will you talk about Bill Cargo and then about Joe Sisco. Particularly Sisco is renowned. But first let's talk a little bit about Cargo, and then we will talk about Sisco.

NEWLIN: Well both men worked very closely together. Bill Cargo predated Sisco in the Department. He was involved I think along with some of the others in the top secret planning during WWII for the UN, so we wouldn't have another debacle like we did after the First World War when we did not join the League of Nations. Sisco I think started out in CIA and I suppose Joe couldn't stand not telling people where he worked or what he did. So he transferred to State and was Cargo's deputy. As a result of this he was not accepted by the old foreign service crowd as a genuine FSO that had come in the front door through the examination procedure. I got along with them very well. My immediate boss was Elizabeth Ann Brown. She, I think too, had done some of the planning during the war.

Q: She had been involved with the United Nations for a long time.

NEWLIN: Yes, that's right.

Q: I knew her when she was the chief of the political section in Athens when I was consul general.

NEWLIN: Ah-ha.

Q: What piece of the action did you have?

NEWLIN: Well I started out working on general political things, whatever came up that Sisco would assign me. I had a minor role in the cold war. After the Soviet invasion of Hungary in '57, I thought up a gimmick to use in the UN that in the credentials committee, we would not accept the credentials of the soviet puppet Hungarian regime. I knew that it would be a major fight to reject the credentials and we probably would have some defections, but if we took no action on the Hungarian credentials, then this would cast a shadow on the Soviet installed communist regime. I remember there were various views in the Department. Sisco and Cargo were both for it, as was the IO (International Affairs) assistant secretary. I remember that the assistant secretary for Far Eastern Affairs, Mr. Robertson, whose mission in life was to protect Chiang Kai-shek and the Chinese Nationalists. It finally got all the way up to Dulles' office. So I found myself with Sisco going into Dulles' office. Robertson was there, and Robertson was worried that this would set a precedent, and maybe the soviets then would say we ought to take no action on the Chinese credentials. So we had quite a debate. Finally, Dulles agreed that this is what we would do. So for years, this went on. We always lined up a majority vote in the committee. I know that it annoyed the Soviets because at one stage Khrushchev complained publicly. He said, "This is something intolerable, and it is a rat in the throat of the United States, the capitalists." I started out in UNP in the old State Department Building. The new State Department Building was just being finished, and so it wasn't long that we moved into the present building. By that time, the Kennedy Administration had come in and there were great changes all around. I by that time, had been made officer in charge of dependent area affairs which in colonial times had been headed by a very senior officer who ran it as his fiefdom. Now this was on the eve of all of the colonial entities becoming independent. So I got involved in all of that. Rwanda and Burundi, and even then I remember there were tensions between the Hutu and the Tutsis, and what was going to happen when the Belgians suddenly left. Then there was a serious problem with West New Guinea, which was then known in Indonesia as West Irian. The Dutch when they granted independence to Indonesia, which they had to do after the war, had left this one remaining part out. So the Dutch still occupied West Irian. They had never done anything there. The indigenous people were a fascinating thing for anthropologists to study because they were stone age people. No roads, No schools, no hospitals, but still. So Sukarno the first president vowed to reunite West Irian. In the early '60s there was a political tidal wave of post colonial leaders. You had Nehru in India. You had Nkrumah in Ghana. You had Nasser in Egypt and Sukarno in Indonesia. You had Tito in the non aligned movement. This became a political issue in the Netherlands. Sukarno took over Dutch businesses and expelled Dutch businessmen. The Dutch said the problem should be solved through negotiations and the administration backed them up. I was involved in all of these discussions. Then U Thant of Burma had become the Secretary General of the UN. We worked out an arrangement whereby Ellsworth Bunker would be designated by U Thant as his representative, and he would invite the Dutch and the Indonesians to meet to discuss the future of this. This was really my introduction to the important international negotiations. Ellsworth then had two State Department aides. I was one, and there was a fellow foreign service officer from the Far East Bureau who was the Indonesian desk officer. We met secretly in a plantation near Middleburg owned by a Texas millionaire. It was a plantation house built in colonial times, well staffed, beautiful grounds and everything. The Indonesian ambassador, Malik, was very capable. The Dutch team were too. Bunker did a very good job. My job, and the job of the other foreign service officer was to take notes of the meetings and make sure to inform the Department of what was going on. We found that there was quite a bit of agreement as to what should really happen, that finally the future should be determined by some kind of form of consulting the people whether they wanted to join Indonesia or not. There should be an interim UN administration of the area prior to the actual consultation. We had gotten quite along when the Dutch said, "I think we ought to draw up a piece of paper saying what we agree on." Bunker said, "Yes. Mike, will you draw up this piece of paper." So I drew up a list of all the things that had been agreed on, and so that was the core of what became the basic agreement. Even though the talks were going well Sukarno behaved badly and kept issuing threats. Suddenly it looked like we wouldn't have any agreement. The negotiations adjourned. Then the foreign minister of Indonesia came to Washington, and Kennedy received him. Later on when Jim Bell, who was the office director for Indonesia went to get debriefed, the foreign minister said, "This is the first time as foreign minister that I have ever been threatened." Kennedy said to him, "You have got to settle this thing diplomatically, and I want to let you know that if you try to use military force, the seventh fleet is in the area." That broke the ice, so we then reconvened, got the treaty done, went up to New York and got U Thant's blessing and the Security Council. In addition to drawing up the draft that became the basic treaty with minor changes, the other thing that I did was I put in a provision that the cost of the UN administration, the interim administration, would be borne jointly by the parties, because I didn't want this to get hung up by people who didn't like the agreement for some reason in the non-aligned or elsewhere., to hold it up in the UN budget committee and that kind of thing. There were people in the State Department who said, "No, we can't have that kind of thing. This is a UN undertaking and the UN ought to pay for it." I stuck to my guns. I said, "This is trying to facilitate UN approval." So this was one of the successes of the Kennedy Administration. It wasn't very widely noticed, but we did have the interim administration. Bunker went out and was in Jakarta. Eventually they had something called mujawara a consultation of the local people. During the negotiations we would occasionally have to have a day or two of no activity while the two parties got instructions. This was certainly true of the Indonesians, and the Dutch too. Afterwards, Hydecooper came to see me in the Department later and said, "Mike, I want you to know that we had no instructions. Lunz the foreign minister said to the Dutch ambassador, 'you go and settle this thing.'" Later on unfortunately he was criticized by some of the political parties for having succeeded. The West Irian settlement resulted in normal relations between Indonesia and the Netherlands. Dutch businesses returned.

Q: From a practical point of view, I am told Indonesian control of the area was not very strong either.

NEWLIN: That's true.

Q: There were lots of places you could fly in?

NEWLIN: They spent no money at all. But a very nice thing happened to me as a result of all of this. Can you imagine a young foreign service officer getting something like this?

That is great. Not many secretaries do that. What was your impression of how Ellsworth Bunker operated?

NEWLIN: Ellsworth Bunker, if you were in Hollywood, and you wanted somebody to play the role of a Boston Brahmin exuding dignity and integrity, you would send for Ellsworth Bunker. His silver hair and delightful person. It turned out that he and his family were Dutch immigrants. He had worked in the Jack Frost sugar company and was a successful businessman. I think he married a very wealthy wife, and he had served as ambassador to India, I believe, as well. He was superb. He was firm when he needed to be firm, but he was always approachable, and I was very fond of Ellsworth.

Q: How did you find the negotiating teams of the Indonesians and the Dutch? To me it sounds like although they had lived together for 300 years, I can't think of particularly a rebel group that came out not that long before in Indonesia I can't think of sort of the stolid Dutch and the rather excitable Indonesians. I mean how did this work?

NEWLIN: Well I think one of the things that worked was the fact that Ellsworth was in charge of it. I was very impressed with the Indonesian ambassador Malik and the Dutch team was also first rate.

Q: Later he was foreign minister wasn't he?

NEWLIN: I think he did go on to be foreign minister. He was a very modest person, soft spoken, very pleasant. Spoke perfect Dutch like many of the Indonesians. The Dutch team had two very senior ambassadors. After the day's negotiations, we had morning sessions, and then we would break for lunch and afternoon sessions. After dinner we would all gather in the living room of this beautiful plantation house and just talk. Then when the Dutch and the Indonesians wanted to compare notes and didn't want the Americans to know what they were talking about, they would speak Dutch.

Q: Did you ever have the equivalent to a representative from one of the deep valleys of New Guinea come out?

NEWLIN: No, they wouldn't have known what it was all about. If I could go fast forward a little bit, all this was now in the Kennedy Administration, and of course we had a new assistant secretary of state in Harlan Cleveland. Harlan was a brilliant creative person, very ambitious, and made it clear that he was going to carry out the program of the Kennedy Administration. We had our own dependent areas in the islands in the Pacific. We had put them after the war under the Security Council because we had a veto there. They were a UN trusteeship, but we administered them. A tribal chief from Samoa came to Washington and called on Cleveland. We hadn't done anything really to help develop the place. People fished and ate coconuts. That was their life and that was fine. Cleveland thought they should agitate for some infrastructure, schools, and so forth. So he kept trying to tell the chief that he had to get busy in a lobbying effort in Congress. The chief didn't understand so Harlan said, "The squeaking wheel gets the grease." Finally when it was explained to him, he said, "Well, we believe in people being modest and not too greedy." The chief didn't understand the squeaking wheel analogy.

The most exciting thing that happened while I was in UNP was the Cuban missile crisis. Some of us were called in on a Saturday afternoon. Sisco wanted to know where, we had a young man named White, where his files were. So we had to go and find his safe and files. We were then dismissed.. We surmised it is either Cuba or he was working on Honduras. Well it turned out of course it was Cuba. So when we finally got to the denouement of this big Security Council meeting with Adlai there, Cleveland was of course on top of all of the things. He said, "The OAS (Organization of American States) is meeting this afternoon." We had a resolution there condemning the installation of the missiles in Cuba, calling on the Soviets to remove them. Cleveland sent a member of our United National political affairs over to be at the OAS for the vote. We were all in Cleveland's office that evening glued to the television. The telephone rang and it was JFK. He said, "Harlan, the OAS just voted in our favor unanimously except for Cuba.. We have got to get this up to New York right away." So Cleveland said, "Mr. President, if you will look at your TV screen, you will see Joe Sisco handing a note to Adlai with the vote." Now I call that completed staff work. If there ever was completed staff work that was it. One of the big advantages I remember is I got to go up to New York for brief periods and then also I got to go up for one whole assembly. For some reason I had items that Adlai was interested in, and so to show you what a wonderful person he was.

Q: This is from the representative of the United States of America to the United Nations. Dated May 11, 1961.

NEWLIN: That shows you what kind of person Adlai was. He was wonderful

Q: Yes. Did you get any feel for Joe Sisco and his bureaucratic skills. He was considered probably one of the preeminent bureaucratic fighters within certainly the State Department.

NEWLIN: Oh he was absolutely superb. He was just great. I learned a lot from Joe. We had a very good relationship. Another thing that I was involved in was I guess this was the apartheid issue. This was a big agenda item for the non aligned.

Q: This was in South Africa.

NEWLIN: South Africa. I drafted a speech for Ambassador Plimpton. He was the deputy permanent representative at that time at the UN. I drafted a speech in which I said that the United States abhors apartheid. So Cleveland and Sisco thought that was just right, that we ought to say this. Of course there were other voices with all of the secret security things we had going with South Africa, didn't want to say this. Finally it got up to Dean Rusk who approved. On the future of Angola, I drafted a speech which said, "governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed."

The European bureau objected on the ground that we should not upset our NATO ally Portugal. Cleveland cleared the speech remarking that it had already been cleared by a Secretary of State named Jefferson. The times were so different then. You did not have the vast bureaucracies in the White House and elsewhere. There were recurrent crises with the Soviets. One involved the Russian demand that we lower the tailgates of our trucks before transiting the Soviet zone on the way to Berlin.

Q: How far should we open the tailgates. You know there was a vast theology about the rights. All of these were quite important because the Soviets were diddling away at them.

NEWLIN: Oh yes. Absolutely. Also nibbling away. Martin Hillenbrand was the German desk officer. His phone rang, it was President Kennedy. He said, "Martin, don't get me into World War III over tailgates."

Q: In know because I was in INR during part of this period. When I would call somebody and they would say who is speaking. I would say this is Mr. Kennedy. You would get this very long pause at the end. I would quickly add, "I am with the State Department. My name is Charles Kennedy."

NEWLIN: I used to go in on Saturdays and just review the intakes so I would be up to speed by Monday. The duty officer at UNP that day was Bob White. He was by that time in public affairs. The phone rang and the caller said, "This is Secretary Dulles." "Yes Mr. Secretary." Dulles said, "I see in the New York Times that Henry Cabot Lodge is going to give a speech at Dartmouth today on disarmament." "Yes Mr. Secretary." Dulles said, "Have you seen this speech?" "Yes Mr. Secretary, I saw the speech." "How would you describe it?" Bob said, "Lackluster." There was a silence and then the Secretary said, "Fine."

Q: You know maybe it was later but did you have any feeling about an anti UN feeling in Congress, sort of right wing or not?

NEWLIN: Not in those days because the UN still even with the influx of the 60 newly independent states we were the dominant power. In the General Assembly we could usually get through what we wanted. Dulles invented something that later I guess could have come back to haunt us. When the Soviets would of course keep vetoing anything to do with the cold war in the Security Council, even though we had the majority of votes. Dulles came up with the uniting for peace resolution whereby, if the Security Council could not act on something because of a veto you could take it to the General Assembly and get it voted on there. Of course it didn't have the binding character of something by the Security Council, but demonstrated a majority view. The UN was deeply involved in the Arab Israeli dispute, We had Ralph Bunche in the Secretariat in New York. We had to pay for all of the Palestinian refugee costs because the rest of the UN said this is your problem. You created Israel so therefore you have to pay for the upkeep of the refugees.

Q: I take it that being assigned to the UN at that time was really quite exciting for a young officer.

NEWLIN: Oh very. Very exciting. You were there, I remember I was up there when the time U Thant was running for Secretary General. That was an interesting thing too that we were involved in later. But I am getting ahead of myself whenever I was assigned to the UN. But I happened to be up there at the UN when U Thant called a news conference in one of the halls. He said, "I have the impression that my candidacy is acceptable to all members of the Security Council." So that was it.

Q: Were you there during the Kennedy assassination?

NEWLIN: No, I will come to that when I get to Paris.

Q: Then how did you find the United Nations it was called what International Organizations in those days?

NEWLIN: IO, The Bureau of International Organizations Affairs. We covered many of the international organizations, but not NATO or the economic ones.

Q: Again here is where somebody with the skill of Joe Sisco, I would think that there would, the United Nations covers all sorts of issues, but the various geographic bureaus feel they have it is their birthright.

NEWLIN: Here come the interlopers.

Q: Yes, so you must have been seeing a significant number of bureaucratic issues didn't you?

NEWLIN: Yes, there were frequent Bureaucratic clashes. I mentioned the problems caused for the European powers by the sudden independence of their former colonies. The founding of Israel created new tensions in an already volatile Middle East. The USSR's support for communist insurgents in Latin America were a major headache. In South Asia the U.S. supported Pakistan whereas Russia supported India. I fortunately was chosen by Sisco to be UNP's go between with EUR. The European Bureau was the one we had most of our problems with. Cleveland got the idea that we would take the Berlin situation up in the Security council. (I thought this was a bad idea indeed, but I was not consulted.) At the beginning of the Kennedy administration Dean Acheson was invited back to the State Department as an advisor to Dean Rusk. Cleveland had discussed the plan in a meeting with Acheson and Rusk. The EUR bureau had not been present so the draft telegram to New York needed the clearance of the assistant secretary of European affairs. I remember it was late in the afternoon. After I cleared it with Acheson, Sisco sent me over to EUR. When I handed it over the assistant secretary immediately called in his deputy and said, "Look at this." Finally he said, "I cannot clear this, these waters are dark and turbid." So I went back and I said, "No sale." Fortunately EUR managed to kill the idea.

Q: Well I talked to people who were in Berlin at the time the Kennedy administration came in, and they were quite concerned because they had things like the tailgate and all. They thought that the Kennedy administration might be very soft on Berlin and might give away the store because there had been talk before they came in, during the election about some flexibility. Of course when you get to the situation as tight as Berlin, flexibility would mean flexibility on one side and not on the other.

NEWLIN: Some years later Khrushchev told Rusk that he had talked to many West European leaders and all of them said they were not prepared to fight if the Soviets took West Berlin. Rusk replied, "Well, you much recon with the fact that the Americans would be foolish enough to do so. Perhaps it was during the Cuban Missile Crisis, Khrushchev was asked during a press conference if he believed the U.S. was a paper tiger. He replied, "Maybe so, but the tiger has thermonuclear teeth."

Incidentally, I do have something I think I should add about the origins of the Cuban Missile Crisis, because this happened years later when I was on a mission to Moscow. It was at a luncheon and the Russian that I was sitting next to had been an aide to Khrushchev. They were down I think in Yalta. The subject came up of American intercontinental ballistic missiles in Turkey right across the Black Sea. Just maybe less than 200 miles, Minuteman. My luncheon companion who was there said Khrushchev declared, "Well if the Americans have nuclear missiles that close to the soviet Union, then I want Nuclear missiles in Cuba close to the United States." That was when he gave orders to do that. As a result of the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Russians removed their missiles from Cuba. Secretly Kennedy committed to remove our missiles from Turkey which was done after a time.

Q: So I think this is probably a good place to stop. We will pick this up in 1963.

NEWLIN: Let's pick it up in 1963 because that is when my tour wound up, and I will have one thing to say next time to say about the end of my stay in the Department.

Q: What does that pertain to so we won't forget?

NEWLIN: An intelligence matter.

Q: Okay we will pick that up then and then we will move on to Paris, is that okay? Great.

Today is 25 October 2006. Mike you were in IO was it?

NEWLIN: I was in IO.

Q: You wanted to say something about an intelligence matter.

NEWLIN: Yes. First I might say a word about onward assignments. It was difficult for people in IO at that time because the geographic bureaus had a great deal of say in the personnel system. In the personnel system you were supposed to be available to go anywhere. In IO we didn't have any posts under our control except New York and Geneva. So when it came time for my tour to be up I applied to EUR for a post. I kept getting rebuffed because EUR had its own candidates. Then a friend of mine who had worked with me in IO, and had wound up at our NATO mission in Paris came by to say hello. He was, even though he was a junior officer, he was very close to Thomas Finletter who was our permanent representative there. He happened to be with Finletter on consultation in the Department. I said, "Do you have any jobs coming open in mission in Paris?" He replied, "Yes, Mike, as a matter of fact we do. Would you be interested in working on political-military affairs in the political section?" I said, "I would love it." He said, "I will go over and talk to Finletter." He went over and came back and said, "Finletter says come on over and meet him." I met him. Finletter said, "I understand you would like to come to Paris?" So that was how that was done. So I was about ready to go off then. In those days of course it was the height of the cold war. The only Eastern Europeans we could have any sort of contact with were the Yugoslavs because Tito had broken with the Soviet Union. Milena and I got very friendly with a Yugoslav diplomat and his wife. I think they had a child with them too. They weren't like the Soviets were, you had to leave somebody behind. After awhile, I think it was over lunch, he indicated that he was an intelligence officer and that he wanted to defect. So I said, "Well I assume you have given this a lot of thought. It is a major step." So I then went back to the Department, and I went over to EUR and talked to the Yugoslav desk officer. He said, "Well we have to tell the FBI right away." The next thing the FBI got in touch with me. One evening, I picked up an FBI agent in my car and then I drove around to a place the Yugoslav and I had agreed. The Yugoslav got in. The FBI agent said, "I understand you want to defect?" He said, "Yes I do." The FBI said, "Well what proof do you have that you are what you say you are?" So the man produced a copy of a recent classified telegram from the State Department. So it turned out that it was a legitimate thing and my Yugoslav friend and his family defected. Then pretty soon after that I was off to Paris. I am told that later there was a message from J. Edgar Hoover to Dulles complementing me on this event. Then some time considerably later, here is a message from the deputy undersecretary of state for administration.

NEWLIN: All right, off to Paris.

Q: You were in Paris from when to when?

NEWLIN: I was in Paris, oh something funny. Personnel developed sort of hiccups over this assignment because it was all handled outside regular personnel procedures. But finally when they got the word that Finletter agreed, they did not want to second-guess him. Eventually Personnel called me and said, "Mike we are ready to write your assignment orders to Paris. We are in the process of trying to save money, so we are going to assign you to Paris for five years to save money of transferring you after four. Is that agreeable to you?" I said, "Yes that sounds all right."

Q: But you owe me.

NEWLIN: I said, "Yes." So that was where we were. We were going off then in 1963 at that time for five years presumably. In those days most people traveled to Europe by ship. So we were supposed to go on an American ship, the old America. While we were docked in New York and people were waving goodbye, I could look down and see that the crew was leaving the ship. A spokesman made a public announcement, "There is a slight difficulty with a dispute with some members of the crew, but we will soon be at sea. We advise the people on the dock to disperse, and we will soon be at sea." Well the America never sailed again. The upshot of it was three days later we went over three docks and sailed on the old Queen Mary. That was a very nice introduction to our thing in Europe. We were met in Paris by the head of the political section, John Auchincloss. It was a very interesting assignment indeed. Finletter of course, had been Secretary of the Air Force under Truman.

Q: Thomas K. Finletter.

NEWLIN: Yes, Thomas K. Finletter. He and Eleanor Roosevelt were with Adlai Stevenson the very liberal wing of the Democratic party. The deputy chief of mission was a very interesting fellow called Durbrow. I don't know if you have ever heard of Durbrow, but he was a cold warrior if there ever was one. Anybody that he disagreed with, he call a goddam UN loving twilight sleeping son of a bitch. 'Twilight sleeping' in those days were narcotics given women in labor. I had the impression Durbrow used the phrase rather than comsymp or comdupe. Since I came from IO, I was under somewhat of a suspicion, and since my wife was born in Czechoslovakia, even though she had risked everything fleeing communism he always sort of regarded her with some misgiving.

Q: When you arrived there, what was sort of the political situation in France vis a vis NATO, I mean at the time you arrived?

NEWLIN: At the time we arrived, it didn't really come to a head so much, but de Gaulle was very much on his campaign to increase France's role in the world and independence. Actually while I was there, the NATO mission was really the focus of a lot of activity in that regard. When I first got there in '63 it was not so. I will say right after we got there, just a few weeks after we got there, the Auchinclosses invited us for dinner. They had a beautiful place on the Champs de Mars. When my wife and I got there, the people taking our coats told us in French, "Kennedy is dead." We were just stunned.

Q: November 22.

NEWLIN: November 22, yes. So we went in, and they had the radio on, so during the entire evening we were listening to the radio as to what was happening in Houston and Washington. That was a tremendous shock.

Under Finletter, we had at that time I arrived a project called the multilateral force. I don't know whether you have ever heard of that. This was a scheme to associate the West Germans with nuclear weapons so that they could defend themselves in case of a Soviet attack. The ICBMs (intercontinental ballistic missiles) would be on surface vessels that looked like merchant ships. The United States would control the nuclear missiles but they would be on ships that you could move around. Of course this is something that would drive the Soviet crazy. Finletter was just hell bent on this idea. The minister for political affairs was Phil Farley. He had reservations and said Finletter sounded like the ancient mariner in his dedication to the multilateral force. The French and perhaps some other delegations were not going to have any part of this, but still we spent a lot of time on that.

It became apparent that political life in Paris was divided into segments between the twice a year de Gaulle press conferences. Three months leading up to his press conference there were all these rumors and speculations about what he was going to say. The press conference would take place and for the next three months everybody was speculating as to what some of his oracular statements meant.

Q: I would like to ask you. What did you do. Was your focus on sort of the French association to NATO or was it you know were you looking at the Germans and other people there? How did you go about doing what you were doing?

NEWLIN: Okay when I got there, the political military thing was really sort of the State Department interaction with the American military presence which of course, was very large indeed. SACEUR was just outside of Paris. We had air bases and other military facilities as well as large related infrastructure such as pipelines. So I was involved with sort of liaison with the military from a political standpoint. Once we got an instruction from Washington that instructed the mission to go and see SACEUR, who was General Lemnitzer, and persuade General Lemnitzer to involve himself in the Cyprus dispute since other efforts to solve the Cyprus problem had been to no avail. So Finletter gave me the telegram, told me to go out and see Lemnitzer, and carry out the instruction. So I got in a car and went out and after a great deal of security and questioning got in to see Lemnitzer. I showed him the telegram. "This is what Washington would like you to do." It had been cleared by the Pentagon. Lemnitzer looked at me and said, "These are the God Damnedest instructions I have ever seen. I am not about to get involved in the Cyprus dispute." So I said, "I will report back. If you would like to call Ambassador Finletter, please feel free to do so." I went back, and Finletter and Mrs. Finletter were waiting for me at his residence, I reported, "Absolutely no sale on that."

I got involved in other things such as the NATO infrastructure program as well. The alliance decided to build an integrated radar program to shield Western Europe. It was very expensive and at the time no European firm was capable of taking on such a huge undertaking. At the end, the contract went to Hughes. We were very close to the Germans and assured them we were working on the multilateral force. Then however, Kennedy's death changed everything when LBJ became president. Finletter decided he had better go off to Washington and try to ingratiate himself with LBJ and bring LBJ up to speed as to where the multilateral force thing stood. Somehow he managed to get a rather small meeting with just LBJ and a few people in the oval office. While LBJ was a master of American politics, he had had little experience in international affairs. So LBJ agreed that yes, Finletter should go right ahead, full steam ahead and work with other delegations and broaden the effort and so forth. Finletter came back very much encouraged. But I thought to my self, well, I wonder about those in Washington and elsewhere who have doubts about this project. I mean even though LBJ gave him his blessing to mount a major diplomatic campaign on this, I just wondered about it.

I guess I had been in Paris 18 months or so, my wife one morning at breakfast came in with the Herald Tribune, and said, "Finletter is out and he is being replaced by Harlan Cleveland." Of course I had worked very closely with Harlan in IO before coming out. So that meant that Durbrow was out too. The first thing that happened was that Harlan's personal political advisor, Tom Wilson, who was not a foreign service officer, but was soon assigned to the mission came out on reconnaissance. I briefed him about the whole situation. Finletter and Durbrow were out. The third ranking person was Phil Farley, who was a brilliant person but rather prickly. In the Department he had been in what was then pol-mil. He had made a lot of enemies in the Department because of his very strong views, including making an enemy of Cleveland. So when I got to work that morning at the elevator downstairs Phil Farley said, "Well I am looking for another job. I am not going to work for Harlan Cleveland." I said, "Now Phil calm down. Harlan Cleveland is one of the most intelligent and creative people I have ever worked with. With you as his deputy here, we would have it intellectually over all the other delegations." Then I made the same point to Tom Wilson when he came out. I said, "Don't let Harlan fire Phil Farley without meeting and talking to him. I think it would be good." Fortunately this was the way it finally worked out. By that time when Harlan came, de Gaulle had really begun his anti NATO campaign. He had decided that he didn't want to go so far as to kick the North Atlantic Council which was composed of ambassadors of almost all European countries, he didn't want to go that far. But he decided he would kick out SACEU the military headquarters. There were a number of ambassadors on the North Atlantic Council, who said, "This is all right. The military HQ can go to Germany or Belgium, and the North Atlantic council would stay here. Well if the North Atlantic Council was supposed to manage crises and the military was off in another country, that wasn't going to work. Some Ambassadors didn't want to leave their beautiful homes in Paris. So at any rate it was finally decided that we would have to go to Belgium where NATO was welcome.

Q: Well up to this point two things. One, in the first place, this multilateral force with these ICBMs and all on ships. I mean it never happened, but how did it strike you? It must have been a nervousness about this because...

NEWLIN: There was a nervousness about it. At first I thought it was a good idea because it would reassure the Germans presumably. That is what it was meant to do. It would reassure the Germans and dampen any future thought that they ought to try to develop nuclear weapons themselves. But I did see that it possibly had quite a bit of security problems associated with it. On the other hand it would certainly complicate the strategic planning of Moscow because they would certainly make every effort to find out which ships these things were on and where they were stationed and where they were going. These would be surface ships made to look like merchant craft. Of course there would be security problems both at sea and if they were allowed to dock along with regular merchant ships. I have already mentioned what the Norwegian reaction would be. While I worked on the project loyally with Finletter since it was his main interest, I wasn't too sorry to see the thing evaporate after LBJ came in, and particularly when Finletter left, the thing died.

Q: Well did you have any contact with the French military or the French civilians dealing with the French military?

NEWLIN: I did not. My main military contacts were with the American military, and planning for their departure and all the problems associated.

Q: Well it was huge.

NEWLIN: We had air bases.

Q: We had supply lines running through France.

NEWLIN: Yes, we had a big pipeline running from Cherbourg or Le Havre running through France to supply the oil and gasoline that we used in Germany. George Ball sent a telegram saying that we wanted ironclad assurances from the French that that pipeline would not be touched. I remember the Ambassador to France at that time was Chip Bohlen. We were at dinner when this came up. He said, "Ironclad jock straps? Where are you going to get anything like that?" Finally we had to face the fact that both the North Atlantic Council and the military were going to Belgium. The Belgians were marvelous. They managed to put up in six months or less a new headquarters for NATO in a suburb of Brussels plus building headquarters for SACEUR and all of the military further away down near the French border. So at that time, that was in '67 I guess it was. Personnel said to me, "Well Mike, you have been in Paris for four years and you are assigned for five. What do you want to do? Do you want to just say you are through with NATO or do you want to finish out and go to Brussels for one year?" I thought it would be interesting to see how this works out, so I said I would like to go on to Brussels. So we packed up and went off to Brussels for the fifth year of our assignment.

Q: Well while you were dealing with the American military there, and working with our ambassador...

This is tape 3, side 1 with Michael Newlin. Mike, Go back when you arrived. What was Finletter's, and maybe the American military you were talking to attitude towards one, the French and two de Gaulle at that time, and how did things evolve?

NEWLIN: I was rather shocked when Finletter mentioned General Norstad who was...SACEUR when I got there.

Q: Lauris Norstad.

NEWLIN: Yes, he was SACEUR. Just after I got there he announced his retirement and left. Then Dirk Sticker, a Dutchman, was secretary general of the North Atlantic Council. So I remember Finletter remarked when Norstad left, he said, "Well that is one down." Then he wanted very much to have Sticker replaced because Sticker was not always easy to follow the American line. On one occasion Sticker was so furious over the U.S. position he grabbed a piece of paper and wrote, "Dear Dean, I resign. Dirk Sticker." He had his aide, an American, take the paper down to Finletter who managed to assuage him. However, Sticker was soon replaced by an Italian and relations improved. Lemnitzer played his cards differently and wanted to maintain as much professional contact with his French colleagues as he could. The French still had their delegation in the North Atlantic Council. I remember before Lemnitzer left that de Gaulle received him with full military honors to give him the Legion d'Honneur and embraced him. A sort of soldier to soldier goodbye..

Q: Well how did, I mean I am trying to get the attitude of both our civilian delegation to NATO and our military, the people you were dealing with, SACEUR, towards this being kicked out of the country by de Gaulle. I mean was there a lot of bitterness, anti Frenchness or anti de Gaullism or what?

NEWLIN: I didn't pick that up from the military. I guess they figured well this is what is going to happen. We have got to live with it. The only thing is they did drag their feet in closing some of the facilities. There was one facility particularly not too far from Paris that kept dangling. They were missing deadlines. I kept harassing them on that. I said, "Look, you have moved practically everything else." It turned out this was the golf course.

Q: Oh yes. Well this is always the, I mean in the Philippines I understand the golf course was the last thing to go.

NEWLIN: Before NATO left, Cleveland went around saying that de Gaulle's policies being followed were accelerating the irrelevance of France in world affairs. Well this didn't go down well with Couve de Mourville, the foreign minister. I am told that at a diplomatic reception, Couve De Mourville saw Harlan Cleveland and he wouldn't speak to him.

Of course, I should mention that about midway through in the Johnson administration, we began to have the looming quagmire of Vietnam. JFK sent the first U.S. military advisors to Vietnam but when LBJ became president the situation had deteriorated to the point where McNamara and the joint chiefs were pressing for combat forces. LBJ, I had the definite impression, had initial reservations about this escalation. If you recall there was a big conference of wise men, Acheson, McCloy, Walt Rostow at the White House and all of them bought into the domino theory, that you cannot let Vietnam fall. So I remember somebody coming back to Paris and telling Cleveland that LBJ was having his doubts about all of this, and he wanted others to participate in his decision on Vietnam whether to go for a massive build up of our military. Cleveland said, "He can't have anybody else. He has got to make the decision himself." Cleveland was all for the Vietnam thing. After we got into Vietnam and after things began to go sour, and it turned out not to be a cake walk by any means.

The NATO ambassadors in addition to meeting in the North Atlantic Council which was a formal thing, they would have a luncheon, a private luncheon with just ambassadors present every so often, I think once a month. Cleveland wanted very much to lobby them, all of his counterparts to really support us on Vietnam. Since I had worked for Cleveland before in the Department, whenever he would go back to Washington on consultation, he would take me along. I would arrange all of his meetings. I remember one in Katzenbach's office. Katzenbach was I think in effect the deputy secretary.

Q: At that point he may...

NEWLIN: Cleveland said, "I want to lash the other NATO members to the American chariot. I want the go ahead to start that." Katzenbach looked at him and said, "I don't think you can do it." I remember Foy Kohler coming out, and this was towards the end of my assignment. We had lunch with Cleveland and a few other people from the mission. Foy Kohler said, "You have to understand that every morning when the president wakes up, his first thought is how do we get out of Vietnam?" Cleveland would come back from his consultations in Washington and say, "Well, we must be doing things all right. I got no complaints whatsoever." The fact of the matter was that everybody was so preoccupied with Vietnam that we were not high on the agenda.

Q: Well during this time, '63 to '68 that you were involved in NATO, how did we view the Soviet threat?

NEWLIN: Well the Soviet threat was a serious matter and that was the glue that held NATO together certainly. Everybody believed the United States would certainly live up to its obligations under the NATO treaty to see to it that the Soviet Union did not encroach into Western Europe. There was that underlying belief.

Q: You left I guess before September of '68 when the Soviets went into Czechoslovakia.

NEWLIN: Yes. We had left by that time. That was a chilling thing too, but there was a great reliance on the nuclear deterrent of the United States. Oh I am forgetting something. It is quite relevant here, which is everybody was relying, particularly the Germans, on the American deterrent. McNamara decided, he was Secretary of Defense, that he ought to educate the Europeans on just what nuclear war consisted of and what decisions you would have to make. So he formed in NATO, the NATO Nuclear Planning Group. It was my job within the mission to work with McNamara and his staff whenever he would come. We had to have Q clearances and all sorts of other clearances. What he was doing was showing that if you did have a Soviet thrust into Western Germany, and you decided to respond with tactical nuclear weapons, he said, "Yes you would kill the advancing Soviets, but in so doing you would kill an awful lot of your own people, and plus the fact that you would be getting hit with Soviet nuclear weapons." So we had maps showing the area of destruction nuclear weapons would cause. I found out later sometime later, that our strategy was with the tactical nuclear weapons in Germany in the event of a Soviet attack we would turn them over to the Germans and let them make their decision just what they would do.

Q: How about during this time you were there, how large did Berlin loom in your radar?

NEWLIN: When we were there, that was not a major thing.

Q: Because it is often, I know by my own experience, I served in that type of situation. All of us who were looking at it were thinking Berlin is the place where World War Three might start.

NEWLIN: Yes, that is certainly true. Khrushchev was unwise enough to try to cow us. He presumably told Rusk, "I have talked to all of the European heads of state, heads of government, and not one of them would go to war if we took over West Berlin." Presumably Rusk said, "Well Mr. Chairman, you just have to consider the fact that the United States just might be crazy enough to do that." Then at one of the crises, I don't know just which one. It may have been the Czechoslovak crisis, presumably Khrushchev was asked at a press conference if he thought America was a paper tiger. "You have to remember that the paper tiger has thermo nuclear teeth." So there was with all of its dangers and everything, there was a balance. The balance of what was MAD, Mutually Assured Destruction.

Q: Was your wife at all concerned or involved at all in the Prague Spring and all coming to Czechoslovakia?

NEWLIN: Oh she was very much indeed. She was just so hopeful when Dubcek came in and with the freedom of speech and assembly reforms. Then she was very distressed over the Soviet invasion and the reimposition of communist rule. It is interesting that Gorbachev knew Dubcek and that they discussed socialism with human faces.

Q: Well then in 1968, whither?

NEWLIN: I was sitting in my office in Brussels and the telephone rang. It was Joe Sisco. Sisco then I guess, had become undersecretary for political affairs. He said, "Mike, I am putting Bill Buffum on the line, and you listen to Bill and agree to what he says." Bill Buffum was then our deputy ambassador to the UN in New York under George Ball. So I said, "Okay Joe, I'll listen." Buffum came on the phone and said, "Mike the head of our political section here is up for transfer, and Joe and I want you to come to New York to be head of the political section." I said, "Oh wow, well I will have to talk to Milena about that." I knew she wouldn't be too thrilled about going to New York. I said, "I will let you know." So I then called him back and said, "Yes I will do it."

So off we went to New York. In those days you got no housing allowance. You got practically no representational allowance. You were just a government employee working in New York, but you were working in this place called the UN dealing with all these other delegations and the UN Secretariat. My predecessor, Don Toussaint, his wife didn't want to live in Manhattan, so they lived in New Rochelle. It was not infrequent to have a late night security council meeting or if you had a crisis in the general assembly and it broke up at midnight or sometimes later. It wasn't worth his while to go down to Grand Central Station to get the train to New Rochelle. He would no sooner get home than he would have to get the train to come back. So he would sleep in the little health unit we had there. I said to Bill Buffum, "I am not going to do that." So they then started looking around to see what they could do. Buffum asked George Ball to intervene with Metropolitan Life Insurance Company (he knew the company's president) so we could live in Peter Cooper Village on the lower east side. Ball's intervention caused a great improvement in Peter Cooper's personal attitude. That was easy for me to come up First Avenue and late nights were manageable.

By the time I arrived Charles Yost had become permanent representative. I was amazed that Nixon had chosen a career foreign service officer for a cabinet level post that usually had been filled by well-known political figures close to the White House. It was wonderful working with Yost. He was one of the great figures of the foreign service and was an expert on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. He was at the Potsdam conference in 1945. There was a picture of him sitting right behind Truman flanked with Stalin on one side and with Churchill on the other. Yost, of course, knew all of the political issues and how the Department worked. It was very easy working with him. He needed practically no great input from the political section. We just carried out his instructions on what he wanted to do. Yost was very considerate. He asked me one day, "I have been invited by the navy to go down on one of our Trident submarines for a launch. Would you like to go too?" I was delighted. So we flew down to Florida, got on the Trident, went out. I then saw really what a nuclear submarine was and the problems you had to solve. Submerged we launched an ICBM 2,000 miles downstream. Then again once he said, "I have been invited to go down to Cape Kennedy for a space launch. I can't go. Would you like to go?" So I got in on that amazing earth-shaking experience. It was at a Security council meeting in 1970 when our public affairs officer came over and said, "There is a rumor that Yost is leaving and he is going to be replaced by Moynihan." I said, "Oh dear that isn't so good." That turned out to be a trial balloon that didn't float. A few weeks later he came over and said the next rumor was, "Yost is leaving. He will be replaced by a defeated Texas politician named Bush." So I said, "I am getting out of here. I am not working for a defeated Texas politician." He said, "Now hold on a minute. He is not a typical Texas politician, so you just hold your horses." So I did. I didn't say anything to the Department or anything. The mission is configured on the corner of 45th Street just across from the UN. A big meeting room is up on the top floor. The ambassadors are on the next floor. The next floor is the political section. We had between the ambassadorial and political section floors spiral stairs you could go up when you were in a hurry. I charged up the stairs on my way to Yost's office one day. A group of people were standing around that I didn't know. One of them came over and said, "I'm George Bush." I said, "I'm Mike Newlin." He said, "Oh, Mike Newlin. They told me in Washington I should look you up. Do you have a few minutes Mike?" I said, "Yes. Let's go in this office here." George Bush said, "Now Mike, I don't know a great deal about the UN. I don't have a great background in foreign affairs. I need your support and the help of your colleagues." He then said, "On the other hand, I have political contacts with people I think can help us here in the United States with what we are doing with foreign policy." Of course we were soon eating out of his hand. He was wonderful. He was fantastic.

Q: This was George Herbert Walker Bush.

NEWLIN: This is George Herbert Walker Bush.

Q: You were in the UN from when to when?

NEWLIN: I arrived there in the fall of '68, and I left in '72.

Q: So when you arrived in the first place, we were talking, we might as well finish that part up. Did the Czechoslovakian invasion by the Soviets and its allies, was that reverberating in the halls of the UN when you got there or not?

NEWLIN: I think it was pretty much over by then..

Q: How did you view your, what was the UN particularly concerned with at that time, during those years, or were there various issues that you found yourself...

NEWLIN: We had quite a wide range of political issues that I worked directly with George Bush on.

Q: Mike, you are going to read an excerpt from your efficiency report explaining what your job was.

NEWLIN: The counselor for political and security affairs is the principal officer in the UN mission below ambassadorial rank, responsible for the achievement of U.S. political objectives in the United Nations. As this position is presently constituted, the incumbent performs dual functions. Either of which could be a full time assignment. The incumbent's primary role is principal political advisor on both substance and tactics to the chief of mission and his two ambassadorial level deputies. Less visible but of near equal importance are his executive responsibilities as head of the political section consisting of 12 officers and 6 secretaries. In the first role the incumbent must keep abreast of a world wide range of political issues either before or apt to come before the UN. He must prepare or supervise the preparation of briefing papers for meetings between the chief of mission and permanent representatives of 131 other countries, the Secretary General of the UN and other important officials often at the foreign minister level. Normally he participates in such meetings and prepares reporting telegrams, or supervises a member of the political section doing so. The incumbent has overall responsibility for staff work in UN political bodies, the Security Council, the General Assembly, and the two political committees, the Trusteeship Council and the Committee on De Colonization and non self governing territories.

I wound up being George Bush's chief political officer from the State Department. We worked closely on a daily basis. The issues that we faced were many and numerous. Among them of course, was the second India-Pakistan war. But before that there was the great issue of Chinese representation. When I got there, that was beginning to heat up. We for years and years ever since Chiang Kai-shek was defeated and left for Taiwan, we supported the Nationalist Chinese, even though they were not on the mainland of China. Then just before the issue came to a head in the UN, we adopted what amounted to in effect a sort of a modified two China policy. We wanted to keep our options open to eventually establish relations with the People's Republic of China. We said that we had a one China policy. We said that we recognize that China was one entity, but that there was a special situation with regard to Taiwan, and we thought that even though China should represent the Chinese people in the UN, there ought to be representation for Taiwan as well. The ultimate status of Taiwan should be decided through negotiations. We engaged in a massive worldwide diplomatic campaign for our new policy. The problem was that Chiang Kai-shek and the Nationalists didn't support the new policy. They weren't in favor of it. The Soviets at that time did not want to have the PRC in the UN; their relations with Beijing were terrible. Even though that they didn't want to have the PRC in they couldn't very well campaign against them. So George Bush was very active in meeting with supporters and getting reassurances that yes when the votes came they were with us. The lineup was complicated. The UK and Canada recognized the PRC. Japan supported us strongly and also mounted a worldwide diplomatic campaign. The nonaligned were aligned against us. We had a wonderful officer in the political section who was a marvelous vote analyzer. On paper, we had a majority of commitments but some of the were soft. Her bottom estimate was that we would lose.

It was about maybe a week before all of this was coming up in the General Assembly and George Bush summoned me to come up, just the two of us. He said, "Mike, I am going to tell you something in the strictest confidence that you are not to tell anyone." He said, "Kissinger is going to Beijing to meet with the Chinese." This was just before the vote. I said, "Well, we are going to lose, but nobody can blame you that we are going to lose." He said, "No I don't believe that at all. We have got firm commitments for a majority, many at the chief of state level. I then went over the opinion of our vote counter whom Bush knew was usually accurate. So then I put together a telegram, a top secret NODIS telegram to the Department that said this is coming up to a vote in a few days. Here are the numbers of states that have said yes they will vote yes. Here are those that are going to abstain. Here are those voting no. We think that when push comes to shove, that we are going to lose and here is our guess as to the final vote. So I took it over to the Waldorf Towers to show George. He said, "I don't like this at all." I said, "Well I think you ought to at least tell the brass in Washington this is our best guess so that it won't come as a shock to them if it turns out to be accurate. Hopefully people will do what they say they are going to do, but we don't know." So he reluctantly agreed to send it. So then Rogers, the Secretary of State wanted to send his aide, Dick Pedersen who used to have the job that I had, up to reinforce us. George was wonderful about it. He called me in and said, "Washington wants to send Dick Pedersen up here, Mike, for the Chinese vote." I said, "He is welcome. By all means let them send Pedersen and anybody else they want to come up here." So Dick came up. In the midst of this really historic meeting in the General Assembly which dragged on into the night. George was summoned to the telephone to get a call from Kissinger in Beijing. He never told me what went on but I think it wasn't a very pleasant thing. Kissinger was obviously very nervous about how things were going to turn out. Sure enough we did lose. We went through a period...

Q: Had the Kissinger visit been announced at that time?

NEWLIN: Oh yes. It had been announced.

Q: So everybody was drawing the conclusions that the game is over.

NEWLIN: Yes. Why should we ruin our future relations with China when Kissinger is meeting Mao? That is how it came out. We had to go down to Washington, went down to Washington with George. We met with Scali and the media and briefed them as to what had actually happened. Long standing allies, the Netherlands, Belgium, Tunisia joined the stampede.

So then the Chinese did arrive. The Chinese ambassador in Ottawa was told to pack up and come to New York and assume his duties there. I don't think the Chinese were really expecting it. I will tell you another very interesting thing that happened. All of this was going on and we were lobbying the quarters. I went over and tried to persuade the Dutch to stand with us and the Tunisians that had promised. They were hell bent to vote for Beijing. The Albanians were the sponsors of the resolution that replaced the Nationalist Chinese with the PRC. So during the meeting it looked like and we were lobbying so much that it looked like that we were going to prevail again in defeating the Albanian resolution. So the Albanian representative got up and started towards the podium. The Pakistani permanent representative Aga Shahi said, "Where are you going?" The Albanian said, "Well I am going up to the podium. I am withdrawing my resolution." Shahi said, "Why are you doing that?" "I am afraid we are going to lose." "You are crazy; the Americans are losing. Don't do that."

Q: Tell me, Mike, Before you heard about Kissinger going to China which obviously pulled the rug out from everything.

NEWLIN: It changed everything.

Q: But before you heard about that, was there sort of the feeling OK we are fighting this battle, and we fought this battle year after year after year to keep the PRC out of the UN. Was there the feeling that OK we are doing this one more year, but this is really a losing battle to go on with?

NEWLIN: Well, Nixon's overture took everyone by surprise. His entire career had been built on strong anti-communism. We assumed that we would again prevail with the support of anti-communist members. Things got off on the wrong foot that night from the beginning. The roll call is decided by lot. You pick out a country name to begin and then proceed alphabetically and the first member to vote that night was Canada. So the Canadians voted against our position. Of course the UK were against our position as well. So this was a losing proposition.

I think they were probably surprised they won. They came in and we couldn't have any official contact with them, but there was a political officer, Harry Thayer in the political section who spoke Chinese, so he was the one that went with the customs and immigration people to assist the Chinese delegation when they arrived. Then George Bush wanted very much to meet the Chinese permanent representative. So I said, "OK, we will arrange that." So I found out when Kwong Hua was going to call on the president of the General Assembly. His office was right behind the podium of the General Assembly so I arranged for George Bush to appear to be making a telephone call on the telephone right outside the door. So when Kwong Hua came out, I said, "Mr. Ambassador, I would like you to meet Ambassador Bush of the United States." They shook hands. That was George Bush's first official contact. Of course they were in the Security Council. It was a pretty dicey thing. At one stage there was a debate, I guess this must have been in the context of the second India-Pakistan war. Of course the Soviet...

Q: It was sort of the Bangladesh war.

NEWLIN: The Bangladesh war, that's right.. And of course the Soviets were supporting India. The Chinese were strongly supporting Pakistan. George Bush got a call from the Department instructing him to call U Thant, the Secretary General and urge U Thant to call for an immediate cease fire between the two. So he did get U Thant on the line, and U Thant was very dubious that this was something he ought to do. I broke in and said, "People are dying. This is something that the UN should do." He said no, that he really didn't think the situation was one that he could take this initiative. So we reported that back to Washington. Then we got word of a telegram from Islamabad saying that the U.S. could call for a cease fire. The State Department shot back and said, "Do you formally request the United States to call for a cease fire?" Then the answer came back,. "Yes. We formally ask the United States." So then we issued the call for a cease fire. It came into being. Then we had a Security Council meeting the next day to bless the outcome of the war and say that Bangladesh was independent. Bhutto, by that time was president. It was very interesting. I went with George over to the hotel to meet with Bhutto. He was an interesting character because he had been very anti American.

Q: Oh he was?

NEWLIN: Yes. But he was very smooth and everything. Then in the Security Council meeting the next day, he denounced the resolution that provided for Bangladeshi independence and for the cease fire and the negotiations. He ripped up the resolution and threw it into the Security Council well. He had had many harsh things to say about India and about a lot of people. Then Bhutto got up and walked out of the Security Council. Then later in the afternoon I saw him walking in the hall outside arm and arm with the foreign minister of India.

Q: Well did you have a problem during this time because there was the famous thing with Kissinger was tilting towards Pakistan and sent I think the Enterprise, the aircraft carrier task force into the Bay of Bengal and all. Did that cause problems in the UN?

NEWLIN: No. Things were moving so fast and everything. It was clear there was going to be a war between India and Pakistan. Bangladesh, they were all in favor of leaving Pakistan. They were a majority. People said this is what is going to happen.

Q: Did you get involved, was there the Zionism is racism business?

NEWLIN: That was later. George Bush was such a, to show you what sort of person he is. He met with the Israeli permanent representative. The Israeli representative said, "Have you ever been to Israel?" George Bush immediately said, "No I haven't been to Israel, Ireland or Italy. I haven't been in national politics before."

Q: The three I's. What about was the issue of Puerto Rico, were these things, I mean the idea that Puerto Rico should be independent.

NEWLIN: On my watch that did not surface. That had been asserted in Truman's time and that sort of thing when they shot up Congress. That didn't come up. I am trying to think of, just look here and see what else. The India Pakistan war. The Security Council debates on India and Pakistan coincided in part with the climactic assembly consideration of the Middle East producing one of the most hectic periods in UN history. "Due to this conjunction of items, Newlin on several occasions represented the U.S. with foreign minister Eban of Israel. The resolution finally adopted by the assembly was one on which the U.S. was able to abstain thereby achieving the major American objective of preserving our middle man role in the Arab Israeli dispute."

Q: You are quoting from...

NEWLIN: I am quoting from an efficiency report.

Q: Well what was the issue in the Arab Israeli in the UN on that?

NEWLIN: I forget exactly what it was. It was a resolution in the General Assembly which was one sided. It was critical of Israel but did not mention there were Arab states involved.

Q: Well did you find, I am trying to capture the period of time, where we have often been accused of being in the pocket of the Jewish lobby. Did you find that to be the case at this time or it sounds like we were struggling to maintain a middle position so we could be influential.

NEWLIN: Yes. In those days we did. We did strive to be, and we did have credibility at that time. Of course the Jewish constituents in particularly New York were very vocal. We did have the ability at that time to be seen as someone genuinely trying to work towards a peaceful solution. It was the basic Security Council resolution, which I guess Joe Sisco was largely responsible for, that did call for Israeli withdrawal from the west bank and Gaza in exchange for negotiations on the status of Jerusalem, which was left hanging, and for Palestinian recognition of Israel. That was our position and we maintained that.

Q: What was your impression maybe of Bush and others who were involved with at the UN of U Thant as the Secretary General?

NEWLIN: Well that had all taken place of course, prior to his arrival. U Thant I think was a reasonable Secretary General. That had all come to a head when I was in the department of State and I would go up to the General Assembly on temporary duty. I was there when Hammarskjöld's plane crashed. We were suddenly faced with having to find a new Secretary General. It was thought at that time that it was Asia's turn. We needed somebody that was from sort of a neutral country that would be acceptable to everybody. Early soundings revealed "The Burmese representative, U Thant." Then the word came from Washington, "Absolutely not. We cannot have anybody as secretary general from a country that has a common border with the PRC." I happened to be walking through the halls when U Thant called an impromptu press conference in the hall and said, "I have the impression that my candidacy meets with approval of all of the members of the Security Council." Well that was it.

Later when I was stationed in New York Sisco came up as the head of a delegation that came up to meet with U Thant to urge U Thant to occupy himself with the middle east situation that was at a deadlock. Sisco urged U Thant to start with Jerusalem. The idea being that if you start with Jerusalem and solved Jerusalem, that everything else would follow.. So U Thant, Ralph Bunche was there and Brian Urquhart. So U Thant said well he would think it over. U Thant decided that was a non starter, so that didn't get anywhere. Previously, the assumption had been Jerusalem, being the most difficult issue, would come last after the West Bank, Gaza, the Golan Heights and refugees.

Q: Well what was your impression of the UN in those days? This is '68 to '72.

NEWLIN: Yes, the UN played an important role in international affairs, as was shown by the Security Council meetings on the India Pakistan war and on other things, to say nothing of the Chinese representation issue. Washington paid attention as to what went on there.

Q: What about George Bush's, I am talking about Herbert Walker Bush, has a reputation of being a very good person. In other words getting out and meeting people. How did you find he operated in the UN?

NEWLIN: Superbly. The first thing he did when he got there, he said, "Mike I want to go and call on the heads of other delegations." I couldn't imagine Henry Cabot Lodge or Goldberg going out and making introductory calls on other delegations. I remember we made the rounds. The representative of Lebanon couldn't believe the American representative wanted to come and call on him? As a politician he was very good. He would always get on the phone first. Whenever he would call, he would get on the line first. He was genuinely liked. He was very supportive of the staff. We would do anything. The hours were long, and the issues were difficult. People were terribly loyal to him.

Q: OK, well I think just looking at the time this is a good place to stop here. We will pick this up, if you have anything to talk about that occurred to you later about the UN you could do it. But otherwise where did you go after in '72?

NEWLIN: Well as a result of while I was there, George Bush and the security council decided to have a meeting outside of UN headquarters. Since Africa was so important in those days, we met in Addis Ababa of all places. After the Addis session he got permission to go on a tour of certain African countries. I went with him. One of them was Kinshasa, the former Belgian Congo renamed Zaire. When my tour was up, George Bush tried to help me get an onward assignment. As a result I wound up being deputy chief of mission in Kinshasa.

Q: Ok we will pick this up in '72 when you are off to Kinshasa as DCM.

Today is 17 November 2006. Mike you were saying you had some recollections, so go ahead with recollecting.

NEWLIN: Well these, fortunately are brief. I thought I had better mention one thing that I did not discuss last time which was the election of Waldheim as Secretary General. While I was there, U Thant's term came to an end. We started out looking for a new Secretary General. Our candidate was a diplomat, a very distinguished diplomat from Finland named Jacobson. Jacobson told us that Secretary of State Rogers had told him that he was going to be the next secretary general, that he was our candidate and "The United States will veto all other candidates until he is accepted by the Security council and recommended to the General Assembly. So we worked very closely with the Finnish delegation, and Jacobson made his rounds. He would report back to us that he had gone and talked to so and so, and they had no objection to his candidacy. That struck me as odd that he never seemed to have people saying you are our candidate too. I asked the Finnish DCM what about the Russians? He said, "Well you don't understand that the Russians could never veto in modern times a Finn." Well when we got to the denouement in the Security Council, then he had several vetoes. Waldheim also had several vetoes including the United States and the British. We were teamed up with the British.

Q: Not Waldheim but the Finn.

NEWLIN: So after we had this deadlock it was clear Jacobson did not have the votes, there were some Europeans that were vetoing him too. So there was a US-UK summit meeting in the Bahamas over a weekend. Rogers and the British foreign secretary agreed that we would support Waldheim. The Europeans coalesced behind Waldheim. We did all the security background checks and Waldheim said yes that he had served in the Wehrmacht in WWII, but that he was on the Russian front and had been wounded, and came back and went into law. It only came out later that yes he was in the Wehrmacht, but he was in Yugoslavia and he served as an intelligence officer. Whether the Israelis or the Yugoslavs really knew about this we had no idea, but it didn't come to light. So Waldheim was then elected. I will have to say that I do not think he turned out to be a very effective Secretary General. It is interesting that the truth about his military service did not come out while he was Secretary General of the UN. After his term was up he was elected president of Austria. While I was deputy assistant secretary in consular affairs (1985-1988) the Justice Department learned the real story and started proceedings to deny him admission to the U.S. under war criminal statutes. I went to a meeting of Justice where Waldheim's lawyer was seeking a hearing. The Justice lawyers were not inclined to agree. I said in such a matter Waldheim should be allowed to defend himself before such a drastic step was taken. A hearing was held and Waldheim was put on the watch list. This meant that senior U.S. officials could not meet with him in Vienna for the remainder of his term as president. In my view, his crime was in the cover-up and there was no credible evidence that he was a genuine war criminal.

Q: Did you pick up anything as to why Jacobson was not an acceptable person?

NEWLIN: No I really couldn't tell. I don't know whether Rogers knew about this in advance. Mrs. Jacobson was very active. She was Jewish and she was very active in Jewish organizations such as Hadassah. Whether that had played any role or not I don't know. But Jacobson was certainly well qualified and he certainly would have been a better Secretary General than Waldheim. Another thing, this is in the anecdote department. George Bush with his background was also a member of something in New York called the links club. That is where a lot of the captains of industry met. So one day Bush said, "I would like to have lunch with the Russian ambassador, Malik. I think we will go to the links club." I said, "Oh I think that is a great idea." I went with him. When we were having drinks beforehand I said to Malik, "Mr. Ambassador, You are now in the very heart of capitalism. The Links Club is a haven for CEOs and millionaires." Instead of taking it lightly, Malik sort of got red in the face and said, "We Bolsheviks are not afraid to go anywhere." So I didn't succeed in a light moment.

Q: OK well you are off to Kinshasa. You were there from when to when?

NEWLIN: I am off to Kinshasa. I was there from '72 to '75.

Q: That is a good long time.

NEWLIN: Three years. I figured it was time for me to have a hardship post since I have had most of my other tours either in Washington, New York or in Europe. It taught me a lesson that is useful and that is that one should not personalize, if you can avoid it, negatively personalize this officials that you may have to work with later. Because when I was in the United Nations affairs in the Department and I was in charge of dependent area affairs, people in African countries and others becoming independent, we had a great deal of difficulty at that time with Rwanda and Burundi with the Tutsi and Hutu and the Belgians were dying just to cut and run and get out. We wanted to make sure there wouldn't be an outbreak of sectarian violence. Sheldon Vance at that time was the head of the Central African area of the African bureau. We had a great deal of difficulty, I had a great deal of difficulty with Sheldon Vance. Clearing telegrams with him was difficult. Sheldon Vance happened to be the ambassador that I was later going to be working for. It turned out while he was there Tasca was the assistant secretary. Tasca fired Vance because Vance adopted what I thought was a very reasonable position on an issue for once, and Tasca fired him. So I filed that away, Vance can't be all that bad if Tasca fired him. So it turned out that we had a very wonderful working relationship. He told me when I first got to Kinshasa, "Mike the way I believe this should work is you should know everything that I know. When I am gone, you will be in charge, and when I come back I am not going to try to second guess any decisions that you made." He lived up to that. At that time I mentioned before how pervasive, and this is something that you would really have to live through, the cold war was. Mobutu was basically put into power by the CIA at the time that the Belgians panicked and pulled out in '61. There were only two Congolese then that had any significant training under the Belgians. One was Mobutu who was a sergeant in charge of Congolese troops and the other was Lumumba who was in the mail department.

Q: A postal worker or something like that.

NEWLIN: In the competition for who was going to take over as president of this new country, it turned out that the CIA and the United States decided to support Mobutu, who was a charismatic personality with political ability. But the regime was pretty corrupt. We had diamonds there in addition to the copper and other resources. The diamonds would be flown in and they would then just be flown off to Belgium for Mobutu's account. His relatives, all of the food, most of it for us had to come in from outside, and a relative of his was in charge of food imports. You can imagine the possibility for kickbacks and stuff like that. And his relatives were salted as well as close cronies. Sheldon gave Mobutu credit, more credit than I thought he deserved, for being a sort of honorable steward of the country. On the other hand, during the time that we were there, the country did stay together, this vast country with all of its ethnic diversity and huge natural resources. You could travel freely. I traveled all around the entire country and no problems whatsoever. When it came to our attention that some of his relatives were involved in some egregious activity, Sheldon in one of his one-on-one meetings with Mobutu would say, "Mr. President. Can I speak to you as a friend?" Mobutu would always say, "Mais oui, mais oui." Sheldon would say, "We have indications that this is going on." Mobutu would say, "Oh well I will have to look into that."

But Sheldon and I and his wife, Jean, and my wife, we were very close and we had a very good working relationship. That lasted about two years.

Then we had Deane Hinton, he had been working I guess, on economic things here in Washington. Deane was a different kettle of fish. Before he came everybody said how brilliant he was. I guess economically he was certainly brilliant. He also must have learned from his experience in Zaire politically because he went on to be ambassador in Nicaragua and I think, Panama as well. Deane was not suited to be an ambassador in Africa. I will have to say. He told me once, he said, "Mike, I don't know how you tell them apart. They all look the same to me."

Q: He was a Latin American hand mainly.

NEWLIN: He was a Latin American hand. He had been in Chile, that's right.

Q: In Central America.

NEWLIN: Yes, that was his beat. So he managed to get on the wrong side of Mobutu in the final year that I was there. He didn't ask me, but he called for his Lincoln Continental official car, and drove off to the center of Kinshasa where the Congolese population was, called Léopoldville, to call on the Cardinal, Cardinal Molongo at that time, who was not a friend of Mobutu. Mobutu took this very badly. So it wasn't too long after that that an article appeared in a Belgian paper called *Jeune Afrique* (Young Africa). The headline read, "Deane Hinton, our man in Kinshasa," Picking up on the Graham Greene book "Our Man in Havana." It was in a staff meeting when the public affairs officer came in and said, "Have you seen the latest edition of *Jeune Afrique*?" So Deane looked at the article and said, "Oh that is nothing. We don't have to report this." I said, "Oh yes we do have to report it." So my tour came to an end and I went off. I was back on home leave between assignments, and my sister came in with the morning newspaper, and she said, "Mike, I see here that Deane Hinton had been declared persona non grata." So I thought thank heaven I was spared, got out of there two weeks before this happened. Of course Sheldon Vance came back temporarily to smooth things over.

Q: Well while you were there, in the first place, did any of the Shaba things down there...

NEWLIN: No it did not. The Shaba province is rich in copper ore; Lubumbashi is the capital. The Belgians had built this fantastic copper mining and smelting operation there. It looked like a diminutive grand canyon with these enormous trucks going down to bring out the ore. The copper ingots were shipped out through Angola at that time. That was the shortest distance down to the Atlantic port. Lubumbashi had been the scene of fighting between rival factions at the time of independence after the Belgians left. It was there that Lumumba was murdered and Frank Carlucci, the consul, was stabbed (fortunately, not fatally). By 1972 the Belgian holding company, *Société Générale*, had returned and Belgian experts ran the copper operation. The local population seemed content.

Q: How did you find working with, Zaire was known as an enclave of the CIA. How did you find dealing with that.

NEWLIN: Well by that time the thing had become more or less regularized. The famous CIA officer, Larry Devlin, who had helped Mobutu at the time of independence had retired from the agency but kept in touch with Mobutu. When I got there, the CIA station chief was very much integrated with the embassy. He would go and see Mobutu, and he would brief the ambassador on what was going on. He didn't go off on any tangents in doing things that we didn't know about or approve. There was a scary moment towards the end of my stay, Sheldon Vance was still there. Mobutu decided that he had to have a presidential airplane. So he wanted a DC-10. McDonnell Douglas were just thrilled. They came to Kinshasa and negotiated what the plane should look like. The actual signing was to be done in Washington. Mobutu sent his minister of commerce, a man named Eketebbe, to Washington to sign the final contract. Sheldon then sent a classified telegram to the Department informing Washington what was happening. He said, "I think you ought to insist on a cost-benefit analysis about what it is going to cost to run this plane." When Eketebbe got to Washington, somebody in either the State Department or Commerce or someplace tipped off McDonnell Douglas. So McDonnell Douglas went to the Zairian and said, "The ambassador in Kinshasa thinks we ought to have a cost-benefit analysis first." Mobutu was furious. He summoned the CIA station chief and said, "I am not going to declare Vance persona non grata, but tell him that I have lost confidence in him." Well, Sheldon was devastated by this. When Mobutu made one of his trips to his villa in Brussels, Sheldon wanted to go up there and talk to him and explain this was sort of standard operating procedure. I persuaded him not to go. "You were entirely right to ask for the analysis. This is an over reaction. I don't think you ought to go hat in hand to Mobutu." So he didn't. Eventually things calmed down, the plane was bought and Sheldon was awarded the Order of the Leopard prior to his departure.

Devlin came back to Kinshasa as a business representative, he was somehow associated with Morris Tempelsman, the diamond merchant. We were wondering if we were going to have any problems. As far as I know he stuck to his diamond thing.

The biggest thing that happened on my watch there was the contract for building of the world's longest electric transmission line between a dam on the Congo River to Lubumbashi, several hundred miles south to carry the electricity down there for an expansion of the smelting operation. Ex-Im Bank was in charge of the overall project which was to cost about \$700,000,000. It was the largest thing at that time that Ex-Im Bank had agreed to oversee. I was charged ½. All of a sudden the thing threatened to come apart at the very last moment over some of the other people that were to participate in this consortium for the Inga-Shaba line. So I stepped in and managed to get the parties together. It was a shortfall of \$270,000,000 which we were able to put back together. That then enabled the thing to go forward. The legal documents were voluminous and provided for benchmarks before funds would be released.

Q: How did you deal with the corruption situation. I have varying accounts. One that Mobutu was just robbing the country blind, but other accounts that actually all of the so-called robbed money was playing the typical tribal chieftain and taking and spreading it around.

NEWLIN: I would say both of these. There was no question that the country was being robbed blind. But I happened to be in the office of the foreign minister Nguza who came from Shaba. Mobutu called him up. I could tell whom he was talking "Oui Monsieur Le President." I said, "Do you want me to leave?" Nguza said, "No, you stay." It was Mobutu telling Nguza what presents he wanted sent to his governor in Kisangani up the river. I could tell from the things he was writing down that it was household things, bolts of cloth, this, that, and the other thing. He did spread favors around, that is true. That was an effective way of maintaining their loyalty. I don't have any impression that there were any great human rights abuses or anything like that. Mobutu was such a charismatic person. He embodied the "Revolution." One thing again that Deane Hinton did. This was before he made the visit to call on the cardinal. Through I guess intercepts, he found out that the central bank was about to ship the silver deposit, the entire silver deposit in the national bank to a storefront in Jersey City. Deane got permission, with a lot of back and forth, to tell this to Mobutu. So he called up Mobutu and said this is what is going on. Mobutu said, "Je suis shocké." "I will immediately put a stop to this. The president of the central bank, (who was a Zairian) will explain it all to you." Of course we never got any explanation of what was going on. This was one of Mobutu's things. It was one of the things that was a black mark against Deane and helped lead to his being PNG'd.

Q: Well one of the things I have heard about Mobutu was that rather than some of the other dictators in Africa, he tended rather than sticking his opposition in jail to give them jobs and move them around and bring them back. I mean you were in power; you were out of power but you didn't necessarily end up in jail. You just lost your job, and maybe after a couple of years you were back in with another job.

NEWLIN: I think that is how Mobutu operated. An American businessman was out in the interior and he called on the local governor. When he went into the outer office, there was a radio on, and it was tuned to Kinshasa. It was playing loud enough so it could also be heard in the governor's office. The governor mentioned this. He said, "You probably wonder why I have that radio going all the time. The reason is that when Kinshasa says that I am being transferred, I want to know it at the same time those bastards outside my office know it." People in important offices could profit from bribes and kickbacks. An embassy family lived next to Minister Eketebbe who did the DC10 deal. For some reason Mobutu sent the police to arrest him. The diplomats heard a great commotion next door and boxes of cash were thrown over the garden wall. The Americans threw them back..

Q: What were you getting from the Belgian business community?

NEWLIN: Oh they were very important. There were a lot of Belgians that did the technical work in things like the bank. The operation I must tell you down in Lubumbashi was just mind boggling when you saw that. Not only was it this vast reserve of copper ore, not far from it was one that was just as big that even had more copper content. Tempelsman and Devlin were interested in developing a second mine near Lubumbashi but it did not come to fruition.

Q: Well how about the Congo which has been replete with missionaries. How did you find the missionary population. American missionaries and the foreign service are not exactly cuddly close. I mean they have different agendas.

NEWLIN: That is well said. Depending on the country it can be quite a problem. During the time that I was in Kinshasa, we for some reason, I don't know why. We did not have a great many missionaries. They were mainly in the interior far from Kinshasa. I don't know whether it was because of the French language or what. Mobutu, even though he and the cardinal had their differences, Catholic churches operated freely throughout the country.

Q: Did you find that American missionaries who would just by nature be protestant, did they have any problems there?

NEWLIN: Not that I know of.

Q: You didn't have any great evacuations which we had during some of its earlier days.

NEWLIN: At the time of independence things were very dicey. A group of American journalists was arrested by newly formed Zairian troops and were about to be shot as communists when the consul, Alison Palmer, arrived, called Mobutu and got them released.

Q: What about along the Burundi Rwanda border. Did you find that the rift of the central government ran very much. The Congo was such a huge place; were there sort of local warlords?

NEWLIN: No. We went up to visit what used to be the Albert National Park, Burundi. It was at that time one of the great nature reserves in the world. We had a consulate in Bukavu. The consul had a wonderful Belgian villa, and the peace corps was there. You can't imagine the difference in that and what happened later.

Q: Okay then in '75 you are off. Whither?

NEWLIN: I am off. I was sitting on my deck and the telephone rang. It was Roy Atherton. He was then assistant secretary of state for near eastern affairs. He said, "Mike, I would like you to go to Jerusalem as consul general." When I had worked at the UN, I had made a tour of the middle east countries. One of the ones that I was most struck with and fascinated by was Israel and in particular Jerusalem. I said, "I accept." I told my wife, "Milena, you will never guess what. We are going to Jerusalem." She was just as excited as I. Two days later the telephone rang and it was Roy Atherton. He said, "Mike, Nick Veliotis is going to be leaving Tel Aviv. I would like you to go down and replace him as DCM." I said, "Well Gee, let me think this over. I have to talk to my wife." He said, "I really would like you to be down there." Both Milena and I had no interest in going to Tel Aviv. I said, "Well at least I will have my own mission because I will not report to anyone else except the State Department." I said, "Down there I would be working for somebody else, I will go with Jerusalem. So that is what we did. The ambassador to Israel was replaced at the same time. Our long standing ambassador, Wally Barbour, was replaced by Mac Toon. Mac Toon had been a cold warrior all his life and while US-Israeli relations were certainly important, we did have other interests in the Middle East too.

Q: He had been in Russia...

NEWLIN: And Eastern Europe, that's right, and he was a real cold warrior. So Mac wound up as the ambassador there. I called on him before going out. He said, "Now Mike, I want you to know, that I don't agree that the consulate general should be an independent post. I think in a country that all consulates should report through the embassy. I am going to take this up with the Secretary." I said, "Fine Mac. I am sure that this has been done, tried before. It is all an integral part of the final solution to the Israeli Palestinian thing. So let me know." So he did mention it to Kissinger. Kissinger said, "No, that has got to be part of the final negotiation. We can't change the status of Jerusalem." So off we both went.

Q: You were there from when to when?

NEWLIN: I was there from 1975 to 1980. I had four years there. The most fascinating post that one could possibly imagine. So much history and political and religious importance concentrated in this one city. I was of course, responsible for all of Jerusalem both East and West Jerusalem and all of the West Bank.

Q: But not Gaza.

NEWLIN: Not Gaza. Gaza for some reason was under the embassy. I don't know for what arcane reason. Before I left I was also dealing with the Gazans diplomatically, having them come up to Jerusalem to meet with Hal Saunders and other officials. So before I got there, I guess it had almost been two years before I got there, the Israelis had permitted free elections to take place in the occupied territories. I am sure they are the only open and honest free elections that had probably happened in the Arab world up until that time. The result is you had a bunch of Palestinians and Gazans, both in Gaza and on the West Bank, that were elected freely by their constituents. So I got to know them and worked with them. At first I think they were somewhat chary of me, but I explained to them what our position was. That they should determine their own future but this had to be through negotiations. The basic idea is that Israel would withdraw from most of the occupied territory and the Palestinians would accept Israel's right to exist in peace. I had the great good fortune to be there at the time of Sadat's visit. That was something I will never forget.

Q: Well let's talk about before. When you arrived in '75, what was the situation in Jerusalem and the West Bank?

NEWLIN: Things were quiet compared to what they were later. The elected officials, elected Palestinians, ran and administered the civilian side of life there, the schools and everything like that. The elected Palestinians all supported Arafat who was then in Tunis. The Israeli military were omnipresent. But that didn't seem to cause any great friction. They knew that was their only way of getting through to the Israelis was through the military. The thing that I focused on was the Israeli settlements. They were just breaking ground for this mammoth settlement in the desert right to the east of Jerusalem called Ma'ale Adumim. I think it now has something like 40,000 people there But then it was just some bull dozers in the desert. So I raised this with Atherton. I said, "Roy, this is going to be a cancer. They are just going hell bent and taking what little land the Palestinians had that they had owned for centuries and fencing it in, large areas, and building these settlements there." Roy said, "Oh well, we don't support the settlement activity. The money that we give to the Israelis we say none of it can be used for settlement." Money was fungible, so there was no disincentive not to go full steam ahead with that. So that was a major thing.

Q: How did our embassy feel about it?

NEWLIN: Interesting that you would ask. Here again I was not told that this particular project was in train. But Mac Toon without any consultation with me persuaded the secretary and President Carter to write a letter to Prime Minister Rabin proposing that there should be a moratorium on settlements. That presumably might interest the Palestinians in negotiations. So Mac Toon gets in his car and comes up to Jerusalem and goes to see Rabin and says, "I have a letter from the President for you." Rabin looks at it and says, "I can't accept this. If I accept this the government will fall. Do you want to have a Likud government? Do you want to have somebody like Begin here?" Toon said, "Oh heavens no, we don't want anything like that." Rabin said, "You had better take the letter back." So Toon's heart was in the right place.

Q: What were you getting. I am not sure but this I guess this is not the period where Jerusalem had, particularly the military were pretty beastly to the West Bank Palestinians. We had a bunch of very activist vice consuls that were running around reporting on the beastliness which got into the New York Times.

NEWLIN: Oh yes, the momentarily famous Miss Johnson was a vice consul in the visa section. We did a human rights telegram which was classified, We put in there our findings, what we were told by Palestinians who seemed credible of the mistreatment of anybody Israelis suspected of being a terrorist. Jerusalem 1500, that was the number of our telegram. That was leaked in its entirety by Miss Johnson. At the same time because she wasn't suited for the foreign service she was terminated. The Department spokesman had to face the media and say that her dismissal from the foreign service had nothing to do with the leak which was the case.

Q: Who was Miss Johnson? Could you explain a little more about Miss Johnson.

NEWLIN: Miss Johnson was a number. She had a Russian mother; she had a Russian background.

Q: What was her first name? Do you know her first name?

NEWLIN: I believe it is Alexandria. When she came into the foreign service she was assigned to Beirut. Beirut then blew up while she was there. She was on the Islamic side of town when the town was divided. So she stayed over on the other side of town and didn't have any contact with the embassy. She was supposed to have been very active in the Islamic community and she didn't have any trouble. Then her second post was Jerusalem. She took an interest immediately in the Palestinians and how were they being treated by the Israelis. She did have very good contacts I must say. But it turned out after she was there for six months that her supervisors came to me and said, "We don't think that she is foreign service material." They said, to me "We have our doubts whether she is foreign service material, but six months is a short time. Can we give her another cycle?" I said, "Oh all right. I think six months is rather short." When the next cycle came around they had changed the rules and the evaluation of her performance had to be signed by me as the chief of mission. By that time I had decided that yes, she just wasn't suited. Smart woman. She received a letter from personnel informing her that she was being separated. She put the notice in her desk drawer and said nothing. The Department did not inform me and several months passed before this episode came to light.

Q: I am wondering if there was anything you might say of a professional nature that made her unsuited.

NEWLIN: One night the political officer called up and said, "Alexandria is missing." I said, "What?" He said, "Yes. She was invited to a dinner with some people from the consulate general, and others and she never showed up for dinner, and she never called. We think you had better notify the Department." I said, "Well do you really think that it is that serious." The political officer said, "Well this has never happened before." I said, "All right, call up the situation room and tell them that she didn't show up and that we will notify the Israelis. So fortunately before we told the Israeli officials, it turned out that she was over in East Jerusalem before the dinner and she met some Palestinian she got to talking to. They just went off together and she never let anybody know she wasn't coming to dinner. That is one thing, but there were other incidents.

Q: Well did you have the feeling that through her reports were biased. Everything about Israel and Palestine is ticklish and political. I mean there are times when I suspect the reporting on Israelis are treated with kid gloves. We don't over report the nasty side of things. But at the same time when you are dealing with something like Palestinians, was she sort of on the other side?

NEWLIN: However I just say that insofar as the substance of her reporting on this sensitive issue, that was accurate or I wouldn't have let the telegram go out. I signed off on this telegram, this famous telegram, telegram 1500. It was printed verbatim I guess in the New York Times, and large parts of it in the Washington Post.

Q: What was in this report?

NEWLIN: Well allegations by family members and in some cases it was former prisoners of the way they were treated. We had one person from Ramallah that we relied on for what was going on locally. He was picked up by the Israelis. We protested that we knew him well and that he would never have anything to do with terrorists. He was let go. Torture may be too far, but his descriptions of what he had to put up with while he was incarcerated were troubling. They probably treated him somewhat with kid gloves because they knew that we were very friendly with him and valued his insights. Let's put it this way. There was enough of these stories of people being left at night in the winter time with windows open and they would be naked and have no blankets or anything like that. Of course with what is going on now days this is hardly a shocking thing.

Q: How did you find the Israeli authorities? The mayor of Jerusalem is of course, a major player in these things. I can't think of his name.

NEWLIN: Teddy Kollek. He was wonderful. Teddy, like all the Israelis had his misgivings about the consulate general, but he knew we were a factor in Jerusalem life. So we got along very well. He would entertain us whenever he would have important visitors. I decided early on that I had to assert my protocol rights. When we had high ranking official delegations that I would be the one that would escort them around East Jerusalem. I got to meet quite a lot of people that way.

Q: How were basically the Israeli apparatchiks, the people you had to deal with. Did they try to put a freeze or give you a rough time?

NEWLIN: No, because they weren't supposed to be dealing with me. I could go over and see the head of the consular affairs section in the foreign ministry. Then there were some Israeli diplomats that I had worked with in New York. So I would see them occasionally. There was one very interesting that happened. In those days in the reporting telegram, you would report your facts, and then the Department took to saying, if you would like to, you could make a comment at the end. But it should only be a comment interpreting what was in your report. It wasn't really supposed to be a policy recommendation. Well, once I fudged that. In my comment, it was something to do with the West Bank, and I said something to the effect that well if we want to accomplish a particular aim, we could do whatever I was proposing. I forget what it was. So that was sent off. Then David Korn, who was the officer in charge of Arab Israeli affairs, called me up two days later. "Oh Mike, you will be interested to know that telegram you sent in, your recommendation has been approved." I nearly dropped the telephone. I said, "What are you talking about?" He said, "Yes. Your telegram came out of the oval office and in the margins was written OK, J.C." I said, "Now you don't mean to tell me, David, that the president reads my telegrams." He said, "You would be surprised how many of your telegrams the President reads."

Q: How did you get along with Mac Toon. He wasn't there the whole time.

NEWLIN: No, he wasn't there. I got along with Mac all right. In the past there were times when the consul general and the ambassador in Tel Aviv never spoke to each other. Mac and I made sure we would keep in touch. In fact Mac would invite us down to dinner, and we would also reciprocate with him.

Then while we were there, the big election took place in Israel. Sam Lewis who was the new ambassador, was en route to Tel Aviv when the election took place, so he stopped off for a day or two en route. Then to everybody's amazement, the Likud won, Begin was Prime Minister instead of Rabin. Before that, Begin had made a trip to Washington and nobody would receive him. No high level meetings. Sam had been briefed about all of the Labor people he would be dealing with, Rabin and Peres and others. So the first weekend he was in Tel Aviv, I guess people in the embassy didn't want to appear too forward, so I called him up and I said, "Sam, if you are not doing anything, would you like to come up to Jerusalem this weekend?" He said, "Mike I would like nothing better." So we are sitting in the garden and he said, "Mike, what am I going to do? All I have been briefed on was the Labor people. Nobody knows anything about Begin except he has the reputation he is a former terrorist and a hard liner." I said, "Sam, you are in the cat bird seat." You are the one that will be educating official Washington as to what kind of person Begin is." So that is the way turned out. Sam and I worked together very closely. There was an incident where one of my vice consuls on Saturday was driving around the West Bank and decided that he would drive into one of the settlements on the West Bank and just see what an Israeli settlement was like, unannounced. So pretty soon his car was noticed that didn't have an Israeli license plate and the settlers detained him for several hours. Monday morning he was beside himself. He said, "We ought to protest diplomatically. A consular officer has diplomatic immunity." I said, "Yes you did, but at any rate we are going to have to bring the embassy in on this and the Department." I didn't want to tell him that he should have asked me should he do this. I would have said no you shouldn't. Sam was wonderful, and we got instructions from the Department that in a low key but very firm way, said, that this person enjoyed diplomatic immunity, and that he did not so far as we could determine break any laws. Sam consulted me about this. I said, "I think this is just right, Sam." Sam then carried out the instructions at the foreign ministry.

Q: Were you there during the Camp David process?

NEWLIN: Oh yes we were.

Q: How did that play form your perspective?

NEWLIN: Wonderfully for about 24 hours. I was sitting in my office, it was on Friday I guess it was and the telephone rang. It was Dick Viets who was chargé d'affaires down in Tel Aviv. Dick said, "Mike, go turn on your television set, and you will see the signing of the Camp David agreement in the White House." I said, "What." I hear all this. I just couldn't believe my eyes to see Sadat, Carter, and Begin all shaking hands and smiling. Then Carter, then in a brief statement said, "And while these negotiations under the agreement take place, settlement activity will be suspended." So I called Viets back and said, "This is really something. This is much broader than an Israeli Egyptian bilateral peace treaty. This is attempting to deal with the whole problem." Because you are dealing with the settlements. Carter then repeated that phrase again the next day when he addressed the joint session of Congress and explained what it meant. So I was euphoric. I said, "This is really a great breakthrough." Two days later, Begin went up to New York to meet with the Jewish leadership. They said, "You, a disciple of Jabotinsky, agreed to a moratorium on settlements?" Begin looked at them and said, "Do you think I would ever do anything like that? I never agreed to do that." This was something Carter was trying to impose. It had not been agreed to formally. Carter was trying to advance the thing. So the next day Viets called me up and told me this had happened. I said, "Well it is going to be, I won't say only, but it is going to be a bilateral peace agreement between Israel and Egypt." He said, "Well Dyan is coming back early, Moshe Dyan the foreign minister, is coming back earlier this afternoon. I will meet him at the airport. I am going to raise this with him." He called me back and said, "I raised it with Dyan and Dyan said yes I noticed that. Don't worry I will sort it out with the prime minister." Of course it never did get sorted out because they went full steam ahead with settlements. The great irony of all of this is that, and I am told this happened at Camp David, when it all came down to a make or break thing at the last, are the Israelis going to remove all of the settlements from Sinai. Begin called up Sharon who was not in the government at that time, but who was the father of the settlement activity. Called up Sharon and said, "Ariel, it has come down to this. If we want an agreement, we are going to have to sign this." Sharon said, "You do what you have to do." Then the irony is that at the end, it was Sharon as prime minister who removed not only all of the settlements in Gaza, but he was ready to go about removing the majority of them on the West Bank until his stroke.

Q: Well during your time there, what about the PLO?

NEWLIN: Well back then, immediately after the Camp David Agreements were signed, after I got the text of the agreement and saw what it actually meant, I didn't wait for any instructions. I got in my car and started the length and breadth of the West Bank calling on the mayors and the other notables. My line was, this is your chance. You complain now about all these years of occupation and interference in your affairs. You have a chance under this to negotiate with the Israelis under the framework agreement. Universally they told me we can't do anything without Arafat's permission, and he is in Tunis. Arafat wasn't about to let the West Bank mayors negotiate. Hal Saunders, who had replaced Atherton as the assistant secretary, came out. I arranged a meeting at the Consulate general in Jerusalem with the mayors and also with the notables from Gaza. This was the first time the Gazans had met with the West Bankers in Jerusalem. I had started going down to Gaza and meeting with them and getting to know them, but they wouldn't come up and talk to me. But when Saunders invited them they came up. Saunders told them exactly what I had been saying. He said, "What do I tell the secretary of state when I get back? Do I tell him you are not going to take advantage of this great opportunity?" They all to a man said, "We can't do anything without Arafat's permission."

Q: This was a period when we were not talking to the PLO.

NEWLIN: That's right.

Q: Were you getting any reflection on Arafat because he turned out as a figure, he turned out to have the most fatal flaw of all. He couldn't close the deal.

NEWLIN: Well, it was interesting. There was a recent conference organized on the Middle East by a group that was associated with something called Nevi Shalom Wahat al Salaam, which is a joint Jewish Arab settlement in Israel proper. Sam Lewis moderated it. We had a group of very good people there on the panel. One of them was David Miller who was at the Clinton Camp David meetings. He said, "The problem with the Camp David meeting that was held was that we knew that Arafat's one consideration was survival. He was in no position by that time to make a meaningful deal. He had no security services that could enforce anything. We can't stop suicide bombings." Arafat was afraid of assassination if he agreed Palestinian refugees could not return. By that time, the whole Arafat administration had become so corrupt, and people were disillusioned.

I gave Barak, the Israeli prime minister at that time great admiration for what he proposed. It was basically what I did in one of my telegrams after I had talked to some people in the foreign ministry. This was in the days when Rabin and Peres were still in power, you didn't yet have an intifada. Yes, there were very occasional suicide bombings but other than that it was not so bad. I found the people that I was talking to in the foreign ministry said, oh, we can solve Jerusalem and to live in peace. If it comes to the temple mount the Palestinians can have the dome of the rock and they can have Al-Aqsa Mosque. They can even fly a flag alongside the Israeli flag. We can work all of this out. All this was before Begin and Shamir. The tragedy is that after the Oslo accords when the PLO agreed to negotiate a peace settlement with Israel and Rabin and Arafat shook hands on the White House lawn, Arafat was so weak he could not control the security situation.

Q: Well you were there, I can't remember, Sadat came to Jerusalem before Camp David. It must have been before. Did that come as quite a shocker?

NEWLIN: We happened to be having dinner with Israeli friends just before this. All during the dinner the friends said, "Do you think Sadat is really coming. Is he really coming?" I said, "All I know is what I hear on the radio and see on the television. He said he is coming, so I have to assume that he is coming." So I happened to be over at the King David Hotel when the advance group from Cairo arrived. I said hello to them and they seemed glad to see me. They said, "Oh, you are from the consulate general." I said, "If there is anything we can do to help you while you are here, you let us know." So it turned out that Osama Al Baz who was the chief advisor to Sadat said, "We would greatly appreciate it if the night before Sadat's speech to the Knesset you could type it in English for us. We don't want the Israelis to see it before he gives it." I said, "Oh yes, we can do that." So I sent my secretary over to Osama's room at the King David Hotel late at night. Osama al Baz opened the door. Unfortunately he was in his underwear.. He said, "Here it is." So she took it and went back to the consulate general and typed it all up. We immediately sent it off to Washington and Cairo. It was very interesting then to the next day to listen to his speech and Weitzman, who I think by that time was minister of defense, was very alarmed. Instead of welcoming this historic initiative, he went to Begin and said, "We must be on the alert. We must be ready for an attack." That was how he reacted. I told my daughter a couple of days later, "We are going over to the King David Hotel, get your identification." So we went over there. We were in the lobby, and I said, "Now in a few minutes through that door over there is going to come the president of Egypt walking arm in arm with the prime minister of Israel. This is an historic moment."

One funny thing going back to Mac Toon, Mac Toon knew that in the past the Israeli embassy and Kissinger had things going which were not always shared with the field. Mac said, "I told Kissinger before I came out that I wasn't having any of this, that I am the ambassador and the senior representative in Israel, and I want to be completely informed." So then I noticed in the paper that there had been a meeting, a reported meeting between Kissinger and Denitz, the Israeli ambassador. Yet we had no reporting telegram out of Washington giving the substance of it. So I rang Mac up and said, "Oh Mac, did you see that report in the paper the other day that Kissinger and Denitz had met but I hadn't received any reporting telegram. Have you seen anything, Mac?" He said, "No, I haven't. I am going off to Washington next week, and I am going to raise this with Kissinger." So when he came back I asked, "What happened?" He said, Kissinger told me, "Ah, Denitz amuses me." That was his only comment.

Q: You know, I think every four years during the primaries for election as president in the United States, when the primary season gets close to New York, they raise the subject that every candidate swears absolute fealty to the idea that we are going to put our American embassy in Jerusalem. It has been 40 or 50 years and it hasn't happened. How did you all feel about that?

NEWLIN: Well, I don't know what the current status of the consulate general is. My successor, Edward Abington as consul general, he did at a certain stage when Carter was in office, he did have, frequent contact with Arafat in Gaza. Later on when he left his post he became an advisor to Arafat.

Q: He still is.

NEWLIN: He still is an advisor to the Palestinians. The Israelis I would get reports from people that had gone to dinner with cabinet members of the Israeli government. They would denounce the consulate general and denounce me in particular. I think it would be a big mistake to change that. I know it is a nuisance, and I am sure if I were ambassador to Tel Aviv to have to go up to Jerusalem all the time. It is not all that long a drive, but still, you have that nuisance.

Q: It is such a political issue because it is recognizing the '67 war.

NEWLIN: That's right. It always goes back to the foundation of Israel, the basic resolution recognizing Israel back to Truman's time.

Q: How did you find, could you sort of compare and contrast dealing with the Israelis, not necessarily just the official, but Israelis friends and people you knew with the Palestinians. Were they two different breeds of cat or pretty much the same?

NEWLIN: There was a difference. Even under occupation the Palestinians were more how do you say it, accessible. More accessible, and the best way to describe this is the experience of a young foreign service officer. This is after I retired and was back working in PM. He had been sent to the Israeli foreign ministry one summer to work as an intern. I said, "Oh I see you were down in Tel Aviv." "Yeah, working in the political section." I said, "How did you enjoy that?" He said, "Mike, that was an interesting experience of in your face diplomacy." I guess it comes from the whole experience and background of many Israelis and all that some of them went through, but others, even the sabras, the Jews that were born in Israel could be pretty prickly. On the other hand in Jerusalem we had good friends who were Sephardic Jews whose ancestors were expelled from Spain in 1492. their family had live in Jerusalem for generations.

Q: Did you get any feel or impact of the various Jewish American groups? There is such a strong influence on our policy right from the beginning. Did that impact on you at all?

NEWLIN: No it didn't I was lucky in that regard. After I left there was a sort of a blow up at the consulate general with some of them who went ballistic when the consul told them we regarded the settlements as illegal. I will tell you one interesting experience I had. There is an ultra orthodox Jewish group which I don't believe you have ever heard of called Naturae Carta. These are orthodox Jews that do not accept or recognize the Israeli state because it is a sacrilege. The Israeli state and the Temple can only be rebuilt by the Messiah. Anything short of that is a sacrilege. So one day my secretary came in and said, "Rabbi Hersch wants to call on you." I said, "Fine I would love to see him." He lived over in the ultra orthodox part of Jerusalem. So here he comes in with his black hat, pale as can be, long Shirley Temple curls coming out. He said, "Mr. Consul General, can you help me get in touch with Arafat?" I said, "Well I can't because the policy of the United States government is to have nothing to do with Arafat because we consider him a terrorist, and I can't speak to him, and I can't get messages to him. I said, "May I ask you, Rabbi Hersch, why do you want to contact him." He said, "Well you know this present government here." I said, "Yes." He said, "Well they are nationalist." I said, "Yes, they are nationalist. They are building this state." He said, "And they are socialist." I said, "Yes." "You put national socialism together and you know what you get." They didn't recognize the existence of Israel; they wouldn't use Israeli money. They would only use dollars. They wouldn't serve in the army, and they wouldn't go to Israeli schools.

Q: Are they a branch, I am going to mispronounce the name, the Litivcars or so?

NEWLIN: Lubavitch. The Lubavitch Rabbi lives in New York, he wouldn't go to Israel.

Q: Well no, they don't accept...

NEWLIN: They don't accept it.

Q: This is an odd group. One forgets that Zionism was not something that was accepted by a significant portion of the Jewish community of World Jewry.

NEWLIN: You are entirely right. I nearly fell out of my chair when this rabbi wanted to get in touch with Arafat.

As I say, I had the best relations with Teddy Kollek. He called me up one day and said, "Mike, would you like to have lunch with Danny Kaye.

Q: A world famous movie actor and comedian, Jewish.

NEWLIN: Comedian, very famous. I said, "Oh I would love to." Kollek said, "I will send my car around. Danny is going to have lunch with some Palestinians over on the Mount of Olives. I thought you might be interested in going along." So we were riding down the street in Jerusalem. Danny was trying to find out whether I was Jewish or not. He said, "What's your name?" I said, "Newlin." "Spell that." I said, "N E W L I N." What is your first and middle name?" "Michael Holt." "Do you speak Hebrew?" I said, "Well, I speak a little bit of Hebrew." He said, "Do you speak Arabic?" I said, "Well I speak a little bit of Arabic," but I said, "Here because of the fact that this was a British mandate for so very long, everybody that I deal with, both Israelis and Palestinians speak English." He said, "Well say something in Arabic for me." I said, "Alan Ra Salan." Danny said, "No that isn't right. It is Aahlaan Raasaalaan." Wait until I tell people that I am riding down the main street in Jerusalem with Danny Kaye and he is giving me Arabic lessons.

Q: Well I would have thought that you would have had some of the Jewish, I mean the Israelis were promoting and with very good reason, tours of Israel by any Jewish group that raised its head.

NEWLIN: Oh that was a very big business.

Q: So I would have thought that you would have been part of the tour.

NEWLIN: No. The last thing the Israelis would want would be a briefing by the American consul general. They wanted to monopolize the tour business. We were friendly with an American Franciscan priest who often escorted wealthy Catholic visitors. At Capernaum in Galilee he was asked by an Israeli guide if he had an Israeli tour guide permit. Because of his important visitors the Israelis did not press the point. When Vice President Mondale came I escorted Mondale in what sight seeing he was able to do in East Jerusalem. Then I took Mrs. Mondale on an extensive tour of Jerusalem. I had to become a tour guide to survive. So I started it out. I would say, "I am giving you today, the secular democratic tour of Jerusalem. If you had time you would spend three days. You would go first, and take an Israeli tour. That would be the Jewish tour. Then a second day you would go and take the Christian tour. Finally, you would take the Arabic tour. And you would never know from each one of these compartmentalized tours, that there was anything other than the specialized agenda being presented. This is where King David and Solomon lived, etc., etc. Then the Christians and all the speculation as to where specific events happened. Then you go to the Arabs and Suleiman the Magnificent was here." So I had to become a tour guide. This was the only thing that I disagreed with Teddy Kollek on because Teddy didn't want me to conduct the Americans around. He wanted to take over that. I said, "No, Teddy." Depending on the visitor, we would have an argument on this point. In Mondale's case, Teddy and I both escorted him in East Jerusalem. Oh, I had Ms. Lillian, President Carter's mother. When Golda Meier died, Ms. Lillian was sent, his mother, to represent. I took Ms. Lillian all around. Took her to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, took her to Bethlehem. Then the Israelis insisted that she go to Yad Vashem which is their holocaust museum, a big holocaust museum and cemetery around. Ms. Lillian didn't appreciate that at all. She said, "When I think about how many American soldiers have died and everything," she didn't go for that. I was also the sole guide in East Jerusalem for former President Ford.

Q: Well Mike this would probably be a good place to stop.

NEWLIN: I think so.

Q: In 1980, whither?

NEWLIN: In 1980 I went back to the Department and I wound up as principal deputy assistant secretary in the bureau of international organization affairs and the assistant secretary was one William Charles Maynes. Bill Maynes.

Q: So we will pick this up then, and you were doing that from when to when?

NEWLIN: I did that for a little over a year. I did it until pretty much the beginning of the Reagan administration.

Q: Okay, today is 4, December 2006. Mike, we are so 1980, IO. In the first place what was your impression about how Bill Maynes ran things? Charles William Maynes.

NEWLIN: I had it wrong. You are correct. It is Charles William Maynes. Bill Maynes. I might say a word how I got the job. I mentioned I think earlier that one of the things that I had to do as consul general was become a tour guide of Jerusalem. And when VIPs came to Jerusalem, it was my job to show them around all of the various sights. Bill Maynes happened to be one of them and we hit it off. It just so happened that Roger Kirk's assignment in IO as principal deputy assistant secretary was coming to an end, so Bill was kind enough to ask me to come back to IO, which I was glad to do. I got along very well with Bill. He obviously was a very liberal well connected Democrat, an intellectual and I believe he was a former Rhodes Scholar. We got along very well.

Q: In IO what issues did you find yourself particularly dealing with in this '80-'81 period?

NEWLIN: Well we dealt of course with the full panoply of issues that come up in the UN either in the Security Council or the General Assembly and other UN bodies. It is important to note at this time that our permanent representative in New York was Don McHenry who replaced Andrew Young who was fired because he met secretly with the PLO. McHenry was a different kettle of fish than Andy Young who was very easy going. McHenry had a background as a foreign service officer, so he knew how the Department worked. So while we all shared the same goals, sometimes things were a little bit dicey. My five minutes fame happened to arise over an issue in the Security Council dealing with Israeli settlements. It happened at a time towards the elections in 1980 when the Arab delegations joined by quite a few of the non Arab delegations had a draft resolution in the Security Council that was critical of new Israeli settlement activity in East Jerusalem. Our policy had been up to that point one of saying this was a violation of international law, that the Israelis should not unilaterally attempt to change the situation on the ground in the occupied territories to the detriment of the inhabitants there. McHenry very much wanted us to support a resolution that had some critical language of Israel in it. He worked very hard with the Arab delegations to come up with a softer version thereof. As luck would have it, Bill Maynes and the assistant secretary for Near Eastern Affairs, Hal Saunders, were both out of town when this came to a head. Embassy Tel Aviv went over to the foreign ministry and consulted on the text of this resolution and reported, "They didn't seem to be particularly exercised over it. McHenry and NEA, the acting assistant secretary in Hal Saunders' absence was Michael Sterner who was a near eastern expert, and myself, all of us noticed this. So we then went to Secretary Vance.

Q: It would have been Muskie.

NEWLIN: Muskie came a little bit later.

Q: So it would have been Vance then.

NEWLIN: Yes. And so we went to the secretary and he in previous meetings with him whenever he came to Jerusalem he was very much against the settlement activity. We felt that he was receptive to this, so McHenry continued to work in New York and we continued to work in Washington to get a consensus on this. We finally did. McHenry was authorized to vote yes for this particular resolution. Well, talk about a backlash. The backlash was immediate. It turned out the Jewish community particularly in New York, were incensed that the United States would vote for something critical of Israel's conduct in Jerusalem. So all of this sort of snowballed over a weekend. President Carter was angry. On Monday morning Vance, Maynes and Saunders were summoned over to the White House. To distance himself, Carter proposed that a statement be issued. Vance agreed. That there had been a failure to communicate. The idea being that Carter did not formally authorize us to vote yes on the resolution, but had wanted us to abstain. The statement had the desired affect, but it was sort of a rebuke to the Department. Well, it was particularly a rebuke to McHenry, Newlin, and Sterner. I have a newspaper article from the Jerusalem Post that went in great detail as to all of the people involved in it and how we had carefully kept any of the Jewish members of the administration in the dark in order to put this shameful thing forward and so forth and so on. I then felt very badly because in retrospect we should not have tried something like this in the middle of a presidential campaign. It was sort of getting towards November and so I went and apologized to Vance. I said, "I am very sorry that we caused this." He said, "Oh don't worry about it. Don't worry about it at all." I didn't know that he had already submitted his resignation to Carter over the failed attempt to rescue the hostages in Tehran. That came out a little bit later, but that was the most dramatic thing.

Q: How much did you feel did this IO position, did everything sort of revolve around the Iran hostage thing?

NEWLIN: Oh yes. The Iran hostage thing dominated just dominated a great deal of time. Then Bill Maynes then towards the end of the Carter administration, he left I think, to edit Foreign Affairs Magazine. So I became acting assistant secretary of state. Shortly after that, Vance resigned and then Ed Muskie became a very short-lived secretary of state. That turned out to be quite an interesting time when I was the acting assistant secretary. At the very end of the Carter Administration and at the beginning of the Reagan Administration. One of the first things that happened was that the Soviet ambassador, Anatoly Dobrynin, made a courtesy call on Muskie. Because there was some UN problem, the Secretary's staff thought that I should be present, because they thought that this issue would come up. It was fascinating to see Dobrynin in action. He came alone, didn't have a minder with him. He mentioned that he had just driven across the United States to California and showed us pictures of the Grand Canyon and other sites he had seen. Then he started talking about Stalin. He mentioned that Stalin used to sometimes on Sundays invite certain people to his dacha outside of Moscow. When Dobrynin was there, the way things were arranged that you had chairs and a little table, and on the table you had a carafe of vodka and a glass. At one stage Stalin got up and walked across the room to talk to someone. So one of the participants went over and tasted Stalin's vodka while Stalin's back was turned, to see what vodka Stalin was drinking. Stalin came back and said to the man, "How do you like my vodka," creating sort of an avuncular portrait. It turned out that Stalin's vodka was water. Dobrynin's story showed that he was in the inner circle. Of course during the Kissinger years and even before, Dobrynin had the inside track when it came to being the channel between Washington and inner circles in Moscow. All of that changed immediately when Reagan came in. His car was no longer allowed to drive into the State Department's underground garage and park next to the Secretary's elevator and go right up. All of this was changed then.

Then immediately when Reagan and George H. W. Bush were sworn in, the first big thing happened to be the release of the hostages. As you remember the Iranians held out until Carter left. After Reagan was sworn in and the hostages were released. Reagan had a large welcoming reception on the south lawn of the White House. Some of us were invited over for that. Then he and Mrs. Reagan gave their first diplomatic reception which was an evening White Tie reception. That set a different tone. This then gave all of us a chance to meet the President and his wife, the Vice President and his wife and the Secretary of State Al Haig. It was quite a very interesting gathering.

Q: Well did you feel an immediate change in atmosphere in IO about the negative attitude of at least some of those around Ronald Reagan about the UN because I recall one of the people who was assigned to the UN talking about we wouldn't care if we had to say bye-bye to the UN in New York and that sort of thing. There had been particularly in the right wing talk about the UN and its black helicopters and concentration camps. You know, I mean a real sort of crazy feel about the UN being a secret government. Did you feel any of this from the Reagan people?

NEWLIN: Well nothing that far out. Of course one of the first appointments that he made was Jeane Kirkpatrick was named ambassador to the UN. The first female representative that we had sent to the UN. My own feelings throughout my foreign service career was that I worked for one administration at a time, and while my sympathies might be with the previous administration and its policies, that votes do count and they were in charge. I made it a point to do everything I could to arrange a useful transition. I got along very well with Jeane Kirkpatrick. I briefed her. We prepared briefing books for her. I went up to her hearings on the hill for confirmation. Then I invited her to lunch one day. She said to me, "Mike I appreciate all of this work that you have done and the briefings that you have arranged for me, but," She said, "all of us in senior positions are being briefed separately by the people that the White House arranges separately." They were sort of setting up the whole change that was to take place. That was the beginnings and stirrings of Reagan's transformation of American politics. We had never had up until then such an effort to really centralize things. I remember earlier in my career during the Eisenhower Administration at the end of Eisenhower's term the Attorney General was Rogers, William Rogers who was later to come back as Secretary of State. The media asked what are your impressions now, you have had eight years. Rogers said, "How little we could change things." So now this had been taken to heart by certainly Reagan and the people around him and they were determined to have dedicated loyalists in all senior positions.

Q: At that point, Reagan had to deal with a Democratic Congress.

NEWLIN: Yes, and his first priority as many Republican administrations was a tax cut. So he had to deal with a Democratic Congress. He was the great communicator and he lobbied each and every member of congress. He would call them up from the Oval Office. Tip O'Neill, the speaker of the House of Representatives was surprised at the outcome when Reagan prevailed.

Q: Well how long did you stay with IO under the Reagan Administration?

NEWLIN: Well after a little hiatus, Elliott Abrams was named assistant secretary. I briefed Elliott and we seemingly got along very well together. I found that at that time he was very appreciative. Then one day he called me in and said that the new administration wanted to have their own people in levels not only at the assistant secretary but at the deputy assistant secretary level, and that I would be leaving IO. They chose Nick Platt to replace me. So I cleaned out my desk and the administrative officer found me an office down in the bowels of the Department, and I moved down there. Then Joan Clark, who was then director general of the foreign service, she got a group of us who were in all of this limbo to go over to what was then the Foreign Service Institute to do oral exams of foreign service applicants. I did that for awhile.

Q: What was your impression of the candidates you were giving oral exams to?

NEWLIN: Surprisingly good. I thought that at that time they were. We had one woman that was, I think she was ethnically an American Indian. She had done all sorts of things. I thought she was, and the other members of our panel thought she was very good. But the female representative in our group didn't think she was suitable for foreign service material. So we prevailed and said this is just exactly what we are looking for. Then in those days, the Department then I must say the foreign service sort of rallied around all of us. There was talk of my being assigned as ambassador to Algiers. So I thought I was on track to go to Algiers. I found out later that the NEA candidate was Mike Sterner, my previous colleague in the UN vote brouhaha, and that Mike Sterner was finally offered the post.. But then Mike decided for family reasons that they would not go, so that opened up Algiers for me. I must say one of the things that Reagan did was when it was decided that somebody was going to be offered an ambassadorial appointment, Reagan would call them up. So everybody was told now, stay by your phone. There was no advance warning. I went to New York to visit friends, and I went to a matinee of Amadeus. When I came back the whole apartment was in an uproar, "The president called, the president called." They said, "If you got back before 5:00 you could call the White House, but if you didn't you would just have to wait." It was after 5:00 but I called the White House, and sure enough Reagan himself came on. I said, "I would be honored to serve you."

I went back to the FSI the next day and said, "Well the president called as they said he would." They asked, "Well how was it?" One of our colleagues was a nervous wreck, time dragged on and he didn't hear anything. He was worried. He was visiting a friend in DC, he was out in the swimming pool. They said, "Hey, the White House is calling." So he rushed to the phone; by the time he had gotten there they had hung up. Finally, he got the call. The other thing that Reagan did was he had the ambassadors sworn in at the Oval Office. I decided that I would use this as an occasion to make some points. So instead of just some pleasantries I said, "Now Mr. President, you will be going in a week to Cancun, Mexico, for this big economic meeting. Among the people there will be President Bendjedid of Algeria. The Algerians played a key role in the release of our hostages in Tehran. Please do take an occasion to thank him for that." The administration when they came in, had said, "We don't owe the Algerians anything." It was very odd. Haig and the others, we don't owe the Algerians anything. Then there was great worry about Reagan even meeting Bendjedid. They thought the Algerians were a bunch of crazy terrorists, and they thought they might try to harm him. Reagan did meet him in Cancun. You had this mixture of Haig as Secretary of State and you had Don Regan as the chief of staff. Apparently nobody ever did a telegram as to what happened there. I kept asking later on, "What is the record of this meeting?" The Department said, "We don't know; we can't find any record that it was made." So at least I made a point there. Pretty soon then, we were off to Algiers.

Q: You were now in Algeria from when to when?

NEWLIN: I was there from 1981 to '85, late '81 to '85.

Q: When you arrived in '81 what was sort of the political, economic relations with the U.S. position with Algeria?

NEWLIN: Well we owed the Algerians a tremendous debt of gratitude for their key role in working with the Iranians to get our hostages released. Warren Christopher the Deputy Secretary of State at that time came to Algiers and stayed there while the Algerians negotiated with the Iranians. Complicated issues such as the release of blocked Iranian funds had to be ironed out.

At the outset of my departure for Algiers to the extent they were aware of Algeria at all, the views of senior members of the new Reagan administration were negative. The Algerian foreign minister had played a major role in resolving the hostage crisis in Tehran. Instead of gratitude, the attitude was the hostage crisis didn't happen on our watch and we don't owe the Algerians anything

Our policy toward north Africa then was heavily biased toward Morocco and Tunisia. When visiting Morocco with Secretary Haig, Nick Veliotis reported he regarded the Algerians as Nasserites.

When I first arrived, to meet with Algerian officials I had to send a diplomatic note to the foreign ministry which entailed a long wait. It was not until Bendjedid sent a back channel message to one of President Reagan's friends at a meeting in Paris indicating a desire for better relations did things begin to change. And change they certainly did.

In Washington they decided to send the station chief from Paris because he was somebody who could speak French fluently, Chuck Cogan, to come and talk to the Algerians about setting up an exchange of intelligence, mainly about Qadhafi. So we had a meeting with Cogan and then a rather large delegation on the side of the Algerians including the chief of military security. This is one of the main posts because President Bendjedid was a military officer, he had been a general. He was chosen when Boumedienne died to be the new man. So he really came out of the military background. The person that had sealed his presidency was then the head of military security. Cogan started off the meeting and made his pitch that it was in our mutual interest, that we had a serious problem with Qadhafi, and that it would be in the interest of both parties if we compared notes. So the head of military security said, "Well, we are a socialist country, and we are unable to collaborate as you suggest." Then he proceeded to dismiss most of the people on the Algerian side from the room. Once they had left the atmosphere changed and it was sort of let's get down to business. How do you suggest we proceed? Well it turned out that in addition to being the U.S. ambassador I was sort of an ex officio station chief because I became the key contact between the Algerians and the United States. Then I had a very good DCM who helped me.

Q: Who was DCM?

NEWLIN: The DCM was Nat Howell. Nat Howell was an Arabist and spoke Arabic fluently, as well as French. So Nat and I would go get in my private car, not the official car, drive out to a suburb to a safe house. There we would meet with the head of military security. We would then exchange intelligence assessments. Then relations began to improve. It got so that I could call up the chief of staff to President Bendjedid, who was the second most powerful man in Algeria, any time that I had to see the president or if I had something I wanted to pass on and didn't need to see the president, I could see him. I would just drive over, no notes or anything like that.

My first real coup, the Algerians were so dissatisfied with the Soviets, with their furnishing military equipment to them. The Russians of course provided them with all the heavy military equipment including their aircraft. The MIGs. It was particularly galling to them that the engines of the MIGs had to be flown back to Russia for servicing. They couldn't be serviced in Algiers. They wanted very much to buy our cargo plane the C-130, a propeller driven but wonderful cargo plane. You can land them on a short airfield and take off. So I took up the cudgels and finally I got permission that we could sell them three C-130s. Before the deal could be consummated I found out from Washington the Algerians had shipped some military assistance to Nicaragua, to the Sandinistas. I then bearded the minister of defense and said, "Now look, I went out on a limb on this, and we got it." He said, "Mr. Ambassador, I assure you this had not been authorized by the central committee and by President Bendjedid. I can promise you that something like this will never happen again, and that we will adhere to the agreement as to how these planes will be used." So that was the beginning of a new relationship with them in that area, in addition to what was happening then on the intelligence side.

Then we began to get some high level visits and Secretary Baldrige, the Secretary of Commerce came with a large delegation. We were able to arrange American businessmen meeting with Algerians. Then Baldrige and I wound up having a meeting with President Bendjedid. When we got into his office he was still working on some notes. He then, made a pitch to Baldrige for better U.S.-Algerian relations. Baldrige took that back.

In the meantime I had re-established contact with my former boss at USUN when I was political counselor there, with George H.W. Bush. Every time I would come back to Washington I would go over to the executive office building and call on him. He would always see me. The first time I went back I called on him. I said, "You know it would be wonderful if you could come to Algiers. They want to have better relations and you could advance the process." He said, "I would like to do that. I have a memo from my staff assistant that says 'Ambassador Newlin will probably urge you to come to Algiers, and you have this trip lined up for Africa and there is no way Algiers can be fitted into that, so by all means tell him no.'" He read me the memo and said, "However, I would very much like to go to Algiers." "Can you line up the State Department?" I said, "Well I think I can. I will certainly try." I went back to the State Department and the African Bureau said, "Absolutely not." Every minute is accounted for in this trip. So we didn't succeed in that effort. Then every time I went back on business or on leave I would touch base. So finally I was told the vice president was making a trip to Morocco, Algeria and Tunis. So this was a big deal from our standpoint. President Bendjedid went out of his way to invite the Vice President and Barbara Bush to a private luncheon, just the four of them with a translator, with Mrs. Bendjedid and himself. Senior George Bush was able to meet all of the main Algerian officials. That was a big plus for us.

Then I had actually started saying my good byes, my tour was up in the summer of '85. It was a Friday afternoon in Ramadan. Fridays were the Muslim Sunday of course and in summer time everybody was out of town. The phone rang and the operations center from the State Department said, "A TWA airplane has been hijacked from Athens. It is reportedly headed towards Algiers. It will be there momentarily. You are to get in touch with the President of Algeria and ask that they let the plane land. Algeria because of a previous hijacking had said they were not going to let hijacked aircraft land. And get firm assurances that they will not let that airplane take off again." I did manage to get in touch with my contact, the president's chief of staff. I relayed my instructions. He said, "Well, on humanitarian grounds, we will let the airplane land." The operations center called and said, "Here is a message that you are to deliver to President Bendjedid immediately." So I started taking it down. I said to Nat Howell, "Get in the car and go to the airport, the plane will be landing soon. I have got to take down this darn message." So I remember at one stage I said, "This is far too long." By the time I got the message written and started having it translated, I left for the airport and got there after the plane just landed. There were two hijackers on board. One of the hijackers who they later called Castro, leaned out the window of the cockpit with a .45 pistol. The Algerians shouted at him, "Get back in that plane; no display of weapons." Then we heard that there had been a third hijacker who for some reason had not been able to get on the plane in Athens. And that the Greeks were eager to get rid of this individual. They didn't want him incarcerated in Greece. I called the operations center and said, "Well now this may be an opening here that can be used." They said, "Absolutely no negotiations with the hijackers. You can't talk to the hijackers." I said, "I am not talking with the hijackers. I am telling you we ought to see if this doesn't present an opening." So sure enough the Greeks put the third hijacker onboard a plane for Algiers. So then we set up a unit out at the airport with the Algerian negotiators and senior officials and myself and Nat Howell. Sure enough the plane arrived from Athens with the hijacker on board and Greek officials. So the Algerians used that bait to get the women and children released from the plane. I didn't know, I had no idea that they had then agreed the plane could fly to Beirut. So I was greeting the women and the children as they got off the bus from the plane when the plane started up and took off for Beirut. So we took the women and the stewardess to our residence and tried to reassure them that we were going to work on getting everybody released. The stewardess furnished us a report on the hijacking and her description of the hijackers. Well the plane when it landed in Beirut, the hijackers shot and killed a navy seal that they had found from his navy credentials and threw the body out on to the tarmac to show that they were serious. They got several other hijackers to join them and then they flew back to Algiers. The plane was kept at the far end of the runway. Then the Algerians started negotiating with them. Their demands were for release of some prisoners that the Israelis were holding. I think there were 400 of them or something like that. So these negotiations sort of took on a life of their own. Finally, about another third of the passengers were released in Algiers. They were men. In the meantime we began to get word in the media that a delta strike force was being sent to Italy. I was very concerned over that. So I told Washington, "Tell Secretary Shultz that under no circumstances should this strike force try to rescue these people by force. The Algerians will resist and certainly the hijackers will blow up the plane. It will be a disaster." They said, "Yes, we will pass that on." So then a couple of days negotiations dragged on, and the Algerians hinted to me that they were about to assure the hijackers that they could arrange for the Israeli prisoners to be released if they would release all of the remaining hostages. I said, "Well I cannot speak to that. I don't know that." The hijackers could on their own radio hear that the delta force was in Italy. It was early one morning, and we had developed in the embassy the ability to monitor unclassified communications. So I was told that there was a great commotion on the runway and the hijackers were threatening to kill more of the passengers. They got the pilot to say that he was being tortured. I was in touch with my contact urging him not to let the plane take off. The Algerians finally let the plane take off, they did not want Americans killed on the Tarmac in Algiers. That was the end of my involvement in it.

Q: What happened to the plane?

NEWLIN: The Plane flew to Beirut and immediately the hostages were dispersed. Then Bob McFarland went to Beirut. It turned out the Israelis were prepared to release the prisoners for their own reasons. So I think that it worked out that finally some prisoners were released as a result of the negotiations that McFarland had.

Q: McFarland was...

NEWLIN: ...on the National Security Council. I think he was deputy at that particular moment. So all of the hostages were finally released. But thanks to the Algerians it was possible for 2/3 of them to get released in Algiers.

Q: Mike, speaking of airplanes and all, were you in Algeria when we bombed Qadhafi and all?

NEWLIN: No, I don't think I was at that time. But we did have a successful comparing of notes. The Algerians were worried about Qadhafi. All of our discussions were secret. The other thing that I should mention, the famous General Walters.

Q: Yes, Vernon Walters.

NEWLIN: Vernon Walters. Well Vernon Walters was sort of a roving ambassador by that time. He had had many claims and I guess he did speak six or seven languages. Vernon Walters was a very close friend to King Hassan of Morocco. He claimed that in the American invasion of WWII, he had given the young prince a ride in his tank. So he was very close to the king. So close to the king that whenever he would come to Morocco, he would meet with the king privately without the American ambassador present. So Walters, then wanted to be sort of a roving super ambassador to the Maghreb countries. He wanted to include Algiers and Tunisia as well as Morocco. I was very happy to see Walters. He was certainly an extraordinary individual, but I was not about to have happen in Algiers what had happened in Rabat. So I was very keen that Walters did not get involved in the kind of liaison work that I was doing. He respected that. President Bendjedid always received him when he came, and we arranged for him to meet top officials with me present.

The capstone to my assignment to Algiers was when I got word from the Department that a state visit slot in the spring of '85 had come open. The person they were trying to have couldn't come, so therefore they were inviting President Bendjedid to come. Well now if you want to ever live high on the hog, you want to be part of a state visit, particularly with the Reagan administration. So my wife and I were members of the official delegation of course. We couldn't stay at the Blair House because that was being renovated, but we had the top floor of the Madison Hotel. Everything went off beautifully. 21 gun reception on the south lawn, the state dinner and meetings in the oval office as well as the family quarters. After that, President Bendjedid went to California. He visited San Francisco as well as Los Angeles. That all went very well. Before the formal meeting in the oval office, I went over with Secretary Shultz and Arnie Raphel who was acting assistant secretary for NEA. We drove in the back gate of the White House and got out and started going through the rabbit warren the White House is on the ground floor. As we got to the main floor, Shultz and Arnie Raphel were nabbed by somebody in an office that wanted to talk to them. The military officer that was escorting us kept going. I thought I had better keep up with him. I kept going until I got to a small office that had two secretaries in it. Then a door out of the wall opened and out came Ronald Reagan. Reagan was such an actor. He had met me before, but he didn't remember. I said, "Mr. President, I am Mike Newlin. I am your ambassador to Algiers. Secretary Shultz is right behind me. He will be here in just a minute." He acted as though he was so delighted to meet me, that it made his day. It was perfect.

Q: How did the Algerians react to this opening to the United States.

NEWLIN: It was controversial. But the people that he had, his closest advisors and everything at that time were in favor. It was sort of a half-life of Sadat. Remember Sadat got fed up with the Russians too. He said, "If you get involved with the Russians they will grab you by the throat." It was particularly true on the military thing. This was a little bit of that. Of course earlier even in the days under Boumedienne, George Shultz built their liquefied natural gas plant and infrastructure. In the Sahara gas fields I was shown a small house that was called the Shultz villa.

Q: Well did, were the Algerians impressed with anything or just the things they say? Had they any idea of the United States would you say at the top level? I mean the United States is a big country, and for people who have lived in Algiers they have gone to France. I mean it is a different thing. Did you feel they were getting a pretty good picture of the United States?

NEWLIN: I think the top echelons were pretty much clued in. I do think that there was this residual revolutionary background and third world kind of thing. Some of that was no doubt in the background. But President Bendjedid managed to make a very good impression on President Reagan. In their meeting in the Oval Office, they had developed an interesting convoluted understanding that they would try to help with the other hostages being held in Beirut. I would receive messages and they would forward them to Beirut. But because they were dealing with Hezbollah and these people, while they tried, they were not able to do anything in that department.

Q: Did the Polisario movement confrontation in Morocco intrude while you were there?

NEWLIN: It didn't because the Algerians, while they had a formal position of support for Polisario self determination in southern Sahara, did not really stir up things. I did get permission for Nat Howell to go to the southern Sahara and to actually meet with some of the Polisario people, but that did not become a major issue. It was an issue for me when I first got there because Walters said that there was the Qadhafi trail through Algeria, that the Qadhafi trail started in Tripoli and went across the southern Sahara to the Polisario. I had a hard time confronting him on that. I finally got him off that tack. But he was so hipped on that.

Q: What was your impression of the Algerian foreign ministry?

NEWLIN: Superb. Absolutely superb. The foreign minister that had played the key role with Warren Christopher in the release of our hostages in Tehran, his plane had crashed on a trip to central Africa. They first announced that everybody had been killed. He survived, but he was seriously handicapped as a result. But he was very capable. Then after I was there for several months, I got a call from somebody in the foreign ministry at night at home saying that he was on his way to Tehran in an Algerian plane, and that the plane was overdue. Could we check with airports in the area in case the plane had made an emergency landing. So I got in touch with the operations center and said, "Check at these airports and see if an Algerian plane has landed there." Well it turned out the Iraqis had mistakenly shot the plane down with everybody on board. So then they had a new foreign minister, I think Ibrahimi. He was very good. He made I think, a very good impression in Washington.

Q: What was your impression of the French Algerian connection while you were there?

NEWLIN: They were condemned to cooperate. I don't think the life of the French ambassador was always a happy one, but obviously so many Algerians were in France of course. Later on, after I left, I think relations did improve, and I think Chirac actually made a visit to Algiers. But the French, there were so many wounds and everything left. The other thing that happened that was sort of a cloud on the horizon was the growth of Moslem sentiment while I was there.

Q: The extreme, the fundamentalist.

NEWLIN: The fundamentalist. Algeria was ostensibly a secular socialist state, with respect for all religions. Certainly the Catholic church was able to operate and so forth. But I noticed while I was there, we used to go up to the Atlas Mountains to a wonderful place called Chréï½a during the weekend for a picnic. We went through a town called Blida which is right at the base of the mountains. There was a rather small mosque to one side of the road. When we first were there for the first couple of years, we would drive up on Friday. There would be men in the mosque and out in the courtyard. By the time we left there were so many people they were out on both sides of the road and almost closing the road. So this was a sign of things changing. Then, of course, after I left, they had a reasonably free and fair election where the fundamentalist party won. Then the military stepped in and cancelled the result of the election.

Q: How were relations with Tunisia?

NEWLIN: I think the relations were proper. The Tunisians were not very much of a factor. Bendjedid did meet with Hassan of Morocco while I was there. They made nice noises about how they were going to cooperate and everything, but I don't think anything came of it. One coup that I had was that we heard early morning on the radio that Qadhafi was going to meet with Hassan, and they were going to unify their two countries. So I fired off a flash message to Washington saying, "Guess what is happening. There is going to be unity between..." This caught the embassy in Rabat by surprise. During my stay I did manage to have very good relations with my counterpart, Joseph Verner Reed in Rabat. He was delightful.

Q: He also had the reputation of being absolutely captivated and almost a captive of the Moroccan court. I mean I think there is something about he would refer to our king or something like that. I mean this is sort of a, I won't say a laughing stock of the foreign service, but considered a bad case of clientitis.

NEWLIN: Well as a result of this report, and after the meeting took place between Qadhafi and Hassan, then Joseph got his marching orders to go see the king. So I got a blow by blow of this from Joseph later. He went, I guess the king was maybe in Marrakech at that time, so he went to Marrakech. The King had a special van, royal van with two facing seats. I guess they rode all the way back to Rabat while Joseph delivered his message about this extraordinary development.

Q: What was the message?

NEWLIN: I guess expressing surprise and warning the king that he had better watch his step.

Q: Well I mean when this thing was announced, in the first place you know, it is almost laughable. You wonder how King Hassan got into this.

NEWLIN: I don't know what his idea was for that. Maybe to show the Algerians that he was going to try to play a wider role in the Maghreb. I don't know what his thinking was.

Q: Did anybody take it seriously?

NEWLIN: No, I don't think so.

Q: Yes because we had been through this with Nasser before with Syria and Yemen. We had already gone through the United Arab Republic and this sort of thing.

NEWLIN: Futile.

Q: Yes, these gestures. Nationality takes over very quickly.

NEWLIN: It does.

Q: Well just to finish up on this, what was life like? How did you find, I have always heard Algerians were rather dour people.

NEWLIN: They could have had that reputation. They had been through a lot. The French pulled out I guess in '60 or '61 overnight. They had never done anything to educate any of the Algerians or any of bring them into the administration. They were just left empty handed. The French took with them the maps of the electric and the sewage grid and much other useful material. The Algerians were thrown into a very difficult situation. The Algerians were not fortunate in having Ben Bella as the leader of opposition to French colonialism, his airplane had been commandeered by the French. He was in prison for quite some time, so therefore he was the national hero. The Algerian elite got together and caucused after the French left, and they decided, this was at the height of the non aligned movement, they would become a socialist country and they would be non aligned. They would be with Nasser and Nkrumah and all of those people. They did start to develop their infrastructure. They did bring in the United States to develop their sizable natural gas reserves. But they adopted a fairly radical brand of nonalignment. At one time they had Stokely Carmichael in Algiers as sort of an unofficial American representative. They broke diplomatic relations with us of course after the Six Day War, the '67 Six Day War. So we didn't have formal diplomatic relations. We had in effect a mission there, but under the Spanish flag.

They let agriculture which had been the breadbasket of France collapse. The French plantations were wonderful, wine and wheat and all these things. They tried to socialize it. They would go out and tell illiterate peasants, "You and the people own this now. This is going to be communal property. The state will provide seeds and things." The peasants grew just enough for their families. Prices, everything had to be imported practically. We were supposed to change our money legally. I think the United States and the British embassy were the only ones that changed their money at the official rate. So when the foreign service inspectors came, by that time the foreign service inspectors were not allowed to accept embassy hospitality. Previously the ambassador would have said come stay at the residence. No, they had to go to an Algerian hotel. They had to eat on the Algerian economy. So we met them and sent them to the hotel. They came the next morning to the embassy and said, "Something is very wrong here. Either this post is not reporting to Washington what the cost is here or Washington is not providing an adequate offset." So that was fine. My predecessor's wife opened the snack bar. That was one of the few places the diplomatic community liked to come, to the American snack bar. Decent food at reasonable prices. Just before the inspectors arrived the administrative officer said, "Well I am sorry, Ramadan is coming up and we have to close the snack bar." I said, "but the inspectors are coming. You can't close it." He said, "I cannot have Algerians cooking and serving food all day when they can't even have a sip of water." So I said, "All right, close the snack bar." After a day or two of hotel food the inspectors decided they would go to the market. They looked around at prices and everything. Finally they bought a watermelon about the size of a basketball for \$15.00. We got our allowances improved as a result.

Q: How about socializing with them? Were there any problems?

NEWLIN: No, there was not. I would have no problem getting ministers, for example the minister of petroleum or the commerce minister to come to the residence whenever we had official delegations. It was sort of funny though. Bendjedid I don't think was a fundamentalist, but he did not drink alcohol. So at official receptions, the Algerians would always take soft drinks until the senior minister arrived. If the senior minister ordered a scotch and soda, then it was all right to have scotch and soda. We had a rather feisty Algerian member of our staff. She advised my wife, "One thing you ought to serve are these delicious dates wrapped with bacon." My wife said, "Bacon? Would the Algerians eat that?" She said, "Oh they would love it." So she offered some to the petroleum minister and he said in French, "You are an Algerian and you are serving bacon?" She said, "Well you are drinking scotch."

Q: Well then you left there in 1985, what for Mike Newlin?

NEWLIN: I got a telephone call from my friend Joan Clark who was by then assistant secretary of state for consular affairs. She wanted me to come to Washington to be her principal deputy. I had thought maybe that Walters, who by that time had been designated as our UN representative in New York, I thought that he might want to have me as his deputy, but he wanted to have Herb Okun instead. So I jumped at the chance to go to Washington. I didn't regret my choice.

Q: So you went to Washington. .How long were you in consular affairs?

NEWLIN: Three years.

Q: Then what did you do after that?

NEWLIN: After that I was ambassador to the UN agencies in Vienna, my final post, which included the IAEA and UNRA and a number of others.

Q: Okay so we will pick this up next time in 1985 when you are going to consular affairs 1985 to when?

NEWLIN: 1985 that would be three years, to 1988.

Q: Today is 13 December 2006. Mike how did you get over to consular affairs and what were you doing?

NEWLIN: Before we get into that, I would like to add a foot note to the time I was Ambassador to Algiers. Remember we talked at the very end I was about to leave when the hijacking of TWA 847 occurred. I would like to have this message recorded.

Q: I am going to read this here. This is message for ambassador and staff from the Secretary of State.

He was the Secretary of State. This is dated July 1, 1985. Very good.

NEWLIN: That was very nice.

Q: It also does show the role, there is no, you are not just a creature of Washington with somebody pushing buttons and you deliver messages. Some people don't understand what ambassadors do. I mean you are put on the ground and all of a sudden there you are, and it is your problem. It is your common sense. It is your ability to deal with it and the people on the ground that you have been working with all along that pay off.

NEWLIN: That's right.

Q: OK consular affairs. How did you get there?

NEWLIN: I was at the end of a three year tour. I described earlier how the Department works from the point of view of the geographic bureaus. While I was in Algiers, I got my instructions except during the hostage crisis through the bureau of near eastern affairs. NEA had no further use for my services in their bailiwick since they had to fight for their Arabists. So I began to cast around. I had thought that maybe Vernon Walters who had been named ambassador to the UN could use a DCM in New York. So I sort of sounded him out on this. It turned out he had long known Herb Okun, and he wanted Herb Okun for that. I was basically looking for something when all of a sudden Joan Clark who had been director general of the foreign service called me up. She was then assistant secretary for consular affairs. She wanted me to come and be the principal deputy assistant secretary in consular affairs, so I agreed to that. I had a very interesting three years in consular affairs.

Q: We will come to sort of the substance of what you were doing, but first, did you talk a bit about working for Joan Clark who was a major figure in the State Department in her era, and how she dealt with consular affairs.

NEWLIN: Joan was one of the first women in the State Department who by sheer ability rose through the ranks. I had known her off and on for years when she was in personnel. Then she went on to other things. She is a superb manager as well as somebody who as director general of the foreign service, you have to handle a pretty prickly bunch of people. She did that extremely well. She really pushed CA, Consular Affairs into the modern world. We got machine readable passports. You no longer have to write down numbers of passports. The whole visa process was automated as well. You could do an electronic name check when somebody applied for a visa to see if there was any negative information on that person or whether they had shopped around for a visa in other places. Now these were major accomplishments in easing the consular worldwide workload. Then she also modernized the business about travel advisories. Whenever you want to know is it safe to go to Bhutan or is it safe to go to Azerbaijan, you can call the State Department and get the latest recommendation as to whether you should go.

Q: This was before the world wide web was available. Now you can tickle the keys on the internet. It is basically the same thing.

NEWLIN: That is right, it is basically the same thing. These were just a few of the things that she accomplished while she was there. She was so competent and knowledgeable. Of course you have to have knowledge of all of the legislation pertaining to immigration and visas and passports and that type of thing. She ran this huge bureau that generated quite a lot of money. Unfortunately the money for passports and visas didn't go, it went to the Treasury. Joan was also highly respected on Capitol Hill.

Q: I remember back in 1977 I was consul general in Seoul, Korea. We had zero based budgeting. I was able to say my section we were able to generate, we actually had a surplus of money. How about your other sections, your political section or economic section. How did you all do?

NEWLIN: So it was a privilege to work closely with Joan. Typically she would say when I am away, you are in charge, Mike. You make the decisions you think are correct, and when I come back there is not going to be any sort of second guessing.

Q: Tell me before we move to some of the other things. You have several almost not really autonomous units. You have got passports, you have got visas.

NEWLIN: You have got protection of American Services.

Q: American services, protection of Americans. All of these sort of have traditionally been little dukedoms and all. I was wondering how you put this together plus the fact that some of the assistant secretaries had special assistants who also have sort of power because of their connection to the Assistant secretary or something. You are kind of like the DCM. How did you find this running herd, sort of like herding beagles or something like this.

NEWLIN: Well that is very well put. Yes you did have particularly I would say on the passport side and to a certain extent maybe on the visa side too, you had sort of fiefdoms. They resented sometimes what they considered to be micromanagement from the assistant secretary's office. But Joan was still able to get her views known and respected. There was no question as to whom was in overall charge.

Q: Well who were you dealing with say in the passport office? For years that had been Frances Knight.

NEWLIN: That was Frances Knight oh good heavens yes. She was really the Secretary of State for passports. Her word was law. Whoever you were, you didn't cross Frances Knight.

Vern Penner was the deputy assistant secretary for passports. Occasionally there would be resistance to something they wanted to go one way and she wanted to go another, but she always managed to prevail. Joan did have, you are right, she did have a special assistant, Phyllis Busco, who had worked closely with her in personnel and as director general. As far as the direction of the bureau was concerned, it was sort of a troika with Joan, Phyllis and myself. We all worked very closely together. Joan told me from the beginning that I would know everything that she knew, and that was a big help.

Q: Well looking at this, I am an old consular hand from way back. You have Joan who was basically personnel, Phyllis Busco who came up through personnel ranks, and you through the political officer ranks. Who the hell knew anything about consular work?

NEWLIN: Well we all had a lot to learn. And we depended, I mean we had Vern Penner whenever something came up about passports, he would tell us what the law was. Also I will get to it later on, we had to testify before Congress whenever immigration bills or anything to do with consular affairs came up in one of the committees on the hill.

Q: Well now, did you, I mean you had the episode, now it came later, the Tamposi thing came after you.

NEWLIN: Oh yes, thank heaven. That would never have happened on Joan's watch.

Q: Just for the historical record you might explain what the Tamposi thing was.

NEWLIN: Well after Joan left, the Reagan administration replaced her with a political appointee, Ms. Tamposi. I think she was from New Hampshire. She knew Sununu.

Q: Sununu was George Bush senior's chief of staff.

NEWLIN: Well Tamposi came in, and Sununu noted that the Clinton candidacy was a threat.

Q: This was towards the end of the George Herbert Walker Bush administration.

NEWLIN: Towards the very end, getting towards election time. So Sununu asked Tamposi to have someone search through the passport files, application files of Clinton. This is something that clearly was way out of line. It was a political.

Q: Well Clinton had been opposed to the Vietnam war, had been at Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar. There was a rumor saying that he had tried to renounce his citizenship.

NEWLIN: Well these were all part of a political pot boiling.

Q: They might catch him with that.

NEWLIN: Yes. So Tamposi asked one of the professional hands in consular affairs to get Clinton's file and see if there was any negative things in there that would interest Sununu. Then somebody told the media about this, and this became a really big problem. As a result of it, Tamposi was fired.

Q: Yes. Well let's come back to your time there. What did you see as sort of the main focus of what you were trying to do?

NEWLIN: The main focus was trying to help Joan manage this very large important, one of the largest bureaus in the department when you consider all of the consular officers worldwide. So we covered the entire spectrum.

Q: Did you find were you getting a lot of pressure about visas either to issue them or not to issue more?NEWLIN: Oh all the time there were pressures particularly after the Tehran hostage thing and the fall of the Shah. There were plenty of applications of people that had fled right after the fall of the Shah or before, who wanted to come to the United States, and there was constant pressure. Most of them wanted to emigrate. That was a long process. Then they wanted to come on visitors visas. There was a real worry that these people had no intention of ever leaving the United States. So this was typical. You got calls from Congressmen's offices that people put pressure on them to get the State Department to issue visas. So this was just one example.

Q: Ok let's take this. You get a call from a congressman, probably his personal staff. How did you handle this?

NEWLIN: Well you would call up the assistant secretary for visas and say look into this. This person is applying and give us your analysis of eligibility. It would come back and usually I would handle this kind of thing. I would then call up the person, the staffer, that had made the request and explain that the State Department did not believe this was a completely legitimate request. Usually that would do it. Sometimes we would get a letter from a Congressman. That had to be answered in writing.

Q: Well were there any that you recall particularly troublesome either individual visa cases or generic visa cases?

NEWLIN: Well we did have some problems. In Manila the consul general there had sort of gone native and he ran everything personally. He had managed to become friends with Imelda Marcos so he was in a social circle with her and her husband. He would then have people come to the embassy and go in through a door that they could come into his suite of offices, and he would handle all of these things personally rather than having them apply normally. So this became something of a problem. Joan sent me out to look into it. I came to the conclusion that this was something out of control and very wrong. By that time the ambassador had left and we had a chargé d'affairs at that time, who also was concerned about the matter and didn't know quite how to handle it. So I came back and recommended to Joan that he should be relieved of his duties. To her credit she agreed. Then he immediately came back to Washington and appealed to her and said that he would like a transfer. I sat in on that meeting, just the three of us. Joan said, "Well I have a problem with that." So he went back to Manila, and by that time Mike Armacost had become the ambassador. Armacost reviewed my reporting and Joan's view on this, and so Armacost decided that he would make a recommendation that the employee be separated for the way he had handled this situation. The individual concerned got a lawyer, a local lawyer. There were meetings with Armacost and the lawyer and the individual. Finally the Department backed up both Joan and the ambassador. He was in fact separated in Manila. But then his friendship with the Marcoses paid off. He went into business in Manila, and apparently financially did very well.

Q: He is dead now.

NEWLIN: Yes, he is dead now.

Q: If somebody wants another view of this case, I am doing an interview with Larry Colbert right now who was a deputy under him and who was very unhappy. I mean we all knew there was a problem. I mean as a consular officer, you know this is a rather blatant thing. The man was apparently a superb manager too.

NEWLIN: Yes.

Q: In a very difficult job in Manila, probably the most difficult.

NEWLIN: He went native.

Q: He went native and he got too... We had another problem later on with another consul general there who was overly friendly with some ladies. I mean it is a real benevolence. I mean I had a bit of this dealing with a lot of corruption. I was consul general in Seoul, and we had a lot of long faces and counterfeit documents. You woke up wondering if another ring had formed before we had broken up the first one.

NEWLIN: It is so true. Another example of the problem were non immigrant visas in Moscow. The embassy in Moscow is an old apartment building converted. Outside this embassy there would be these hordes of people trying to get in line to apply for visas. It wouldn't be appropriate to try to use marine guards, so we hired local Russians to maintain order who were probably KGB officers. And of course they were taking bribes and everything. If you wanted to go to the head of the line you would go up and talk to them. So this caused another set of problems that was very difficult to deal with.

Q: Yes, I mean this is, the unfortunate thing is consular affairs particularly the visa business, I mean it is the only thing, you might say the only negotiable item that embassies or consulates have. This is something people really want. I mean it speaks to the attraction of the United States.

NEWLIN: Yes, that's right. I found that out. You probably have had the same experience. On my first post as a vice consul issuing first of all non immigrant visas in Frankfurt in 1952. So people would meet me at social functions and say, "Oh we are having a dinner dance tomorrow night. Won't you come," and so forth. Then others would say, "I own a vineyard down in the Rhineland, and I would like to have you come down for wine tasting," and this kind of thing. This was all the time. The consul general at that time was just wonderful. That was Mr. Chetwynd Montagu deRenzy Pigott.

Q: Yes.

NEWLIN: And Mr. Pigott said to me, "Mike, I don't want you doing any favors whatsoever to any of these applicants. I mean you decide it based on the guidance and instructions of the Department."

Q: Well back to consular affairs, what about during the time you were there, what about protection of American citizens? Were there any major problems you had to deal with?

NEWLIN: A major problem during my tenure in CA was the Americans who were held in Beirut. I became the CA point man and among other things I led interagency team debriefings when one would be released. We did have another type of problem, that is when the Reagan Administration came in, his name is Gary Bauer.

Q: I don't know him.

NEWLIN: He was one of the ones nursing a desire to run for president. He wanted to push a ban on anyone with AIDS getting a visa.

Q: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

NEWLIN: Yes, HIV. This would mean testing all of your visa applicants for AIDS. You can imagine the problems this would cause with other governments who would then say all Americans had to be tested before they could get a visa. I participated in quite a series of discussions over this. It never did come to pass.

Q: Yes, that was the first, the thought being that if we kept this infection out of the United States. It was a problem.

NEWLIN: Oh it was a problem but with hundreds of thousands of people applying for visas it was not a practical idea.

Q: What about American visitors abroad? How were things going with that?

NEWLIN: I am glad to say that they were handled very well. This was before, well of course, we had had at the very end or during the Carter administration, we had the question of all of our hostages in Tehran. But that was sort of the beginning then of something that I was involved in later while I was in consular affairs of the hostages that were taken in Beirut. So I can speak to that. When I was in Algiers we had one American prisoner who during the early 60's, during the resistance to the French, had carried a bomb and delivered it to an Algerian. Fortunately the bomb did not go off and kill anyone. He got on a ship and was on his way to Spain. The Algerians found out about the bomb, found out about who had gotten it, so they had the ship turn around and come back. This man was sentenced to death, but then he was sentenced to life imprisonment in Constantine. We had the chief of the consular section visit him every so often. Eventually I managed to persuade the Algerians to release him because he was no danger to anybody. This was, that particular thing of visiting prisoners to see how they were, and making sure they are not being mistreated was an important part of our service to American citizens.

Q: Did we have, I am thinking of Mexico but these exchange of prisoner programs or had that come about?

NEWLIN: No. There was at that time a major problem as there had been for years with illegals crossing the border. So Joan asked me to go with the head of Immigration and Naturalization Service to Mexico. I went with him, and we met with the President of Mexico. He was very frank with us. He said, "We both have this major problem that Mexico has been unable to produce enough jobs to keep people from wanting to go illegally to the United States. We are working on this, and we ask your forbearance."

Q: How were relations with Immigration and Naturalization Service during your time?

NEWLIN: They were businesslike. We got along, I think both Joan and myself got along very well with our opposite numbers in INS.

Q: Was there a problem of getting good consular officers to stay in the consular side of things?

NEWLIN: Really there wasn't. When I would go abroad on consular business, it was a lot of time the consular officer who would be my control officer. We had really in general superb managers in posts abroad. One obvious case was this one that we mentioned earlier, but in general we did not have problems.

Q: Speaking of problems, what about Beirut? Because this later became the Iran Contra affair.

NEWLIN: I had a brush with Iran Contra. Up until this particular incident, Secretary Shultz had been aware earlier of Bud McFarland who was the head of the NSC, had mentioned to him or had let him know that there was a possibility of working with the Iranians to get our hostages released, and that the Iranians were interested in some arms shipments. Shultz said, "Absolutely not. We should never have anything to do with that." Our policy was we will not talk or deal with terrorism, and we had a policy during the Iran Iraq war which was going on, that we would not sell arms to either side. We were asking our allies not to do that as well. I got involved, I don't remember just how. But when one of our hostages in Beirut would be released I would head up an inter departmental working group, and go to Frankfurt where they would come. They would be released in Beirut. They would go overland to Damascus, and then they would be flown to Wiesbaden to the air force hospital there where they would be debriefed and have a physical.

I was cutting the grass one Sunday afternoon in the front yard, and I got a telephone call from the State Department. They said, "David Jacobsen has been released in Beirut. We want you to leave tonight with the team. Please show up at Andrews Air Force Base as soon as you can." So I did. This was the first time that Shultz really smelled a rat, because all of this happened two days before the mid term elections on November 2, 1986. A White House draft statement was brought over to him, hand carried, that spoke of Hostages, plural, being released. Somebody had struck out the "s" on Hostages. So whoever was running this operation had expected all of the hostages being held or at least more than one would be released. So on November 3, there was a newspaper article, Al Shiraa in Beirut which reported that there had been a secret trip to Tehran by McFarland to talk to the Iranians about release of our hostages. Then that sensational report was followed by a statement by Rafsanjani, the speaker of Iran's parliament, who revealed that yes indeed, McFarland did come to Tehran in September of '86 with four others carrying military equipment. Clearly a swap of arms for hostages. Carrying military equipment which had been purchased from international arms dealers. Rafsanjani said they were traveling with Irish passports. They carried with them a Bible signed by Reagan, and they also had a chocolate cake with it. Immediately this set off all sorts of alarm bells. When they brought me the telegram in Wiesbaden with the Al Shiraa thing, the person who gave it to me said, "Look at this. Isn't this the most ridiculous thing in the world." I said, "Well it is so bizarre I think there might be something to it." The next day Rafsanjani's bomb came out. Immediately the media picked up on all of this. Shultz let it be known immediately that he was opposed to any sort of arms for hostages deal. The media said the White House has made a deal with the terrorists, and Shultz was cut out of the action. Shultz was horrified, and he thought this had the possibility of becoming another Watergate.

In the Nixon administration he was Secretary of the Treasury, and he had resigned over a point of issue. It didn't have anything to do with this, but he had resigned rather than go along with something Nixon wanted to do. But he had seen what Watergate had done to destroy the Nixon presidency, and he was very concerned that this had the potential to do this to Reagan Shultz called Poindexter who at that time had replaced McFarland as national Security Advisor and said we had to give complete facts to the public right then. Poindexter refused. He said this would complicate efforts to secure the release of other hostages and would prevent maybe the establishment of a correct relationship with Iran. I got to Wiesbaden before Jacobsen. There is a small airport at that time, military airport, near the hospital which was separate from the big Rhine Main airport. I went out with some members of my team. A Lear Jet with Swiss markings landed. I went out to the plane, and when I got into the cabin there was Jacobsen and there was Terry Waite who was a representative of the Archbishop of Canterbury who was working on hostages release. There also was Oliver North. North said, "I am not here." So we talked briefly. The media was up in a grandstand. We agreed that Jacobsen should confine himself to talking about his situation as a hostage, and his release, but not get into any other areas. So we walked over to the media. We went then to the Wiesbaden hospital where he had a physical and the debriefings started. The people doing the debriefing, from his descriptions of his confinement, he thought he heard airplanes, and he thought that they were near the sea. So the people doing the debriefing thought that they could pinpoint where in Beirut he had been held. So CIA then was tasked to go to this particular place they thought the other hostages might be being held. It turned out that wasn't accurate. So after the debriefing then finally Jacobsen held a rather bizarre press conference. We were on a big balcony at the hospital, and the media was down below, including Pierre Salinger. Jacobsen meandered and meandered but he didn't get into anything that would indicate he was knowledgeable about what had led to his release. So after two or three days of the debriefings and these other things, we got into a plane and went to Washington.

We were immediately whisked into the White House and we found ourselves in the cabinet room with the President and Nancy Reagan and some others. The press was all outside in the rose garden waiting for Jacobsen and the President to come out. I could tell there was a tremendous amount of tension, particularly Jacobsen talking with Nancy Reagan and the President. Then soon Ollie North came in and joined that group. Then Jacobsen and the President went out, and Jacobsen took the line that the press ought to just back off. Back off, your focusing on these hostages is causing difficulties for the hostages and efforts to get them released. After that then my time with Jacobsen was over.

I then was involved with other hostages later. There was the release of Father Jenco and Father Jenco's extended family all wanted to go to Wiesbaden to meet him. Then they decided they wanted to go to the Vatican with him. Then we had this great group of Jencos going around and finally they met the President at the White House. I was told that my job was now to inform the Jenco clan that Father Jenco was going back to his order in Chicago and U.S. financial and other government participation was over.

Q: Did you ever get called by the Iran-Contra Committee?

NEWLIN: Fortunately I didn't. They had no idea that I was involved. All of this is explained in great detail by Shultz in his magnificent book *Turmoil and Triumph*. He goes over his battles that he had that went on for months and months. Reagan had a blind spot. One thing that Shultz and Cap Weinberger, Secretary of Defense, agreed on was that these arms for hostage deals were just absolutely dynamite, and that our constant assurances, statements by people, that there was no such thing going on was going to come to haunt us. He would participate in Meetings with others where Shultz and Weinberger would say this is a violation of our policies and possibly our laws to go into this kind of a thing with arms for hostages. Reagan would say, "This isn't arms for hostages. This isn't arms for hostages. We are just trying to establish good relations with the Iranians. We have a chance now that Khomeini is gone to establish good relations with them." Time after time Shultz would think he had turned this thing off, and then find out that it was still going on. It wasn't until Meese was asked to investigate a rumor that the proceeds from these hostage arms sales to Iran had been diverted to the Contras in Nicaragua who were fighting the Sandinistas, that the whole thing really blew up. Shultz went and met with the President. The President said, "I am dumbfounded. I had no idea this was going on." So Poindexter was sent back to the Navy and Oliver North was sent back to the Marines. The whole thing was then, but then there were these hearings on Capitol Hill where Shultz was magnificent. He told the whole story there, and then finally at a press conference, Reagan said, "I said earlier there were no arms for hostages in our contacts." He said, "In going over the record it appears that this operation deteriorated, and I now know that this was not correct what I said, and that there were arms shipments." He had been told repeatedly by Shultz what Poindexter and North were really doing but he was so focused on the hostages that he had a blind spot. Amazing story that at one stage the Israelis were involved in this. The Israelis would then provide 200 TOW anti tank weapons from their stocks.

Q: Target on wire.

NEWLIN: Target on wire. The Israelis would then provide this, and these would be the things that would then be taken to Tehran.

Q: At this point Iran and Iraq were waging a terrific war.

NEWLIN: A war, and people were horrified. Bremer was going around the world trying to buck up people not to provide arms to either side, and here we were doing this. Then the Israelis would then ask us to restock their TOWs.

Q: You know essentially if you had American citizens being held by some group in a foreign country, this is the responsibility of consular affairs, but was this sort of taken out of your hands? I mean did the White House say let us handle this?

NEWLIN: Well there was an attempt made in the Jacobsen debriefing by CIA to hijack the reporting. We had clear guidelines as to how the reporting was to be done. It was to be done in State Department channels, top secret, with other code words to restrict the distribution. One of the people on the delegation who probably was from CIA, and William Casey the head of CIA was the one in government that was involved with McFarland first and then with Poindexter and Oliver North and others.

Q: Did you have the feeling were there times when you were told...

NEWLIN: This individual came to me and said, "The information that Jacobsen is providing is so sensitive that we have got to compartmentalize this." And he said then, "We will send Jacobsen's testimony dealing with highly sensitive information through CIA channels, and then other aspects of it that are not so sensitive can go." I said, "Absolutely not." I said, "We are going to adhere to the agreed reporting procedure." He said, "Well this is what Washington wants." I said, "Fine. When I get instructions from the State Department that this is what I am to do, then we will then compartmentalize. But until then we are going to send it the way we have agreed." The instruction never arrived of course.

Q: Well by 1988, I take it that with this particular thing, things are going pretty well. I mean there were no particular things. How about aircraft hijackings or ambassadors being kidnapped or anything like that?

NEWLIN: Well you know Reg Bartholomew's embassy was blown up in Beirut. Then there was the case of the Achille Lauro, the cruise ship that was hijacked. Then we had an American citizen, Klinghoffer, who was in a wheel chair, and he was assassinated and thrown overboard. His body was later recovered. So it became my duty to go to New York to represent the United States at the funeral and the arrival of the body and for the funeral. I, then, had to read on national television a statement from the President expressing our condolences and our assurances that we would make every effort to apprehend the people that had done this and see that they were brought to justice. The Egyptians, when the Achille Lauro came to Alexandria and the Egyptians arrested the hijackers and then released the rest of the passengers, we tried to get the Egyptians to hang on to, keep the hijackers there. They wanted no part of that. So they put the hijackers on a plane to Europe, which we then intercepted and forced to land at our air base in Italy, Sigonella. This annoyed the Italians that you had a plane at an American air base surrounded by U.S. troops, and then you had the U.S. troops surrounded by Italian troops. This led to a standoff as to what was going to happen. But eventually the hijackers were turned over to the Italians, and they were tried and sentenced to prison.

Q: Well in '88 what did you do?

NEWLIN: Then I had to testify before Congress, in March of '86. Before that in February of '86 I testified before the Congressional Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe. It is hard to imagine the difference between visas and regulations nowadays concerning visas and what we had prior to 9/11. I was called up to testify why the regulations concerning visas were consistent, consummate with the principles of the 1975 Helsinki final act, which was a major thing on negotiations with the Soviet Union on human rights. So I had to go up and say that we needed to maintain the possibility of refusing visas to people that we had good reason to believe were ineligible to receive the visas.

I made the case that it had never been the approved policy of the United States to deny visas merely because the applicant wants to say that he disapproves of the U.S. or one of its policies, and that no denial is ever based on a person's abstract beliefs. Then I did go on to say that under the laws, the so called McCarran-Walters Act, that we will deny personal access to people who aim to undermine our system through their actions or who are likely to engage in proscribed intelligence activities or who raise funds or otherwise assist our enemies. The commission was reasonably satisfied that our record was good on that, that we didn't arbitrarily refuse visas just because somebody said they disagreed with the United States.

Q: Well then in '88, what?

NEWLIN: Well I also in March of '86 testified before the subcommittee on Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism, the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, and I went into the business of travel advisories. Then my time in consular affairs was drawing to a close, and so I was asked if I would be interested in going to Vienna as resident representative to the UN agencies in Vienna, the main one being the International Atomic Energy Agency, but UNRWA, the Palestine relief agency, Drug matters, status of women, and a few other UN activities had been combined. The UN headquarters was in New York. The European headquarters was in Geneva, but the Austrians I guess, at the initiative of Kurt Waldheim, when he was minister of foreign affairs decided to attract these other agencies to have their offices in Vienna. So I was asked if I would be interested in that, and I said I certainly was.

Q: So you were in Vienna for how long?

NEWLIN: Three years, until I reached mandatory retirement at the end of '91, 65 I was, and I stayed on a couple of months extra and came back in '91.

Q: Well today is 27 December 2006. Mike, you were then , we didn't cover Vienna did we.

NEWLIN: No, we haven't covered Vienna yet?

Q: You were in Vienna from when to when?

NEWLIN: Let's see, I got there in '88, late in '88. Then I left in '91.

Q: In Vienna what were you doing?

NEWLIN: I was the resident representative to the UN agencies in Vienna. It was a rather complicated situation. Vienna decided, of course you have the UN headquarters in New York; you have the European headquarters in Geneva, the old League of Nations complex, and the Austrians decided that they would become the third UN city. They lobbied and got quite a few UN affiliated agencies to come to Vienna, and they built a very nice enclave for them on the other side of the Danube from the main city. The main one was the International Atomic Energy Agency, IAEA, which is interesting in itself because even during the cold war which is when it was established, ourselves and the Soviet Union had a very strong interest in seeing that nuclear non proliferation did not take place. There was UNRWA, the UN Relief and works agency for Palestinian refugees. There was something called UNIDO, the UN Industrial Development Organization, which later was phased out. It was quite a large thing when I got there. It was a center for the UN agency to combat the drug trade. And then there were social issues, the commission on the status of women. I think those were the main ones. The main job was of course, with the IAEA. That was structured so that you have a governor as the chief representative, but he is not resident there. The governor is not resident. Then you have the resident representative, who is also an ambassador who then attends to the ongoing business between times when the main body consisting of the governors is in session. Like some other cities, Paris and Brussels, we had four ambassadors resident in Vienna. There was the bilateral ambassador, myself, and then the ambassador to the CSCE, conventional forces, and then there was another ambassador assigned as head of delegation for developing a chemical weapons treaty. All four of us were there.

Q: Who was our bilateral ambassador to the Austrians?

NEWLIN: Henry Grunwald, the former editor in chief of Time Magazine was the ambassador when I arrived. His term came to an end, and he was replaced by Huffington, and an industrialist who was an oil tycoon.

Q: An oil man from Texas.

NEWLIN: We all did our own thing. It used to be prior to my arrival that on the Fourth of July, each of the four would hold receptions for their respective colleagues. Grunwald suggested that all of us come over to his residence and had a five ambassador receiving line. That worked out better.

Q: First before we get into what you were doing and what the issues were, I mean although you weren't bilateral, being a bilateralist at this point with the Austrians. I mean you were a foreign service officer. What was going on in Austria at that time, and how did we see that? Was Kurt Waldheim an issue at the time or not?

NEWLIN: Waldheim was an issue at that time. I had two encounters with Waldheim. Of course we have covered earlier my time when I was political counselor at the mission when he was elected Secretary General. Then later when I was in the bureau of consular affairs. We understood when he was elected that he was in the German army and that he was on the Russian front, that he was wounded, and he came back to Vienna and practiced law. The facts came out much later that while he was in the army he was an intelligence officer, and he served in the Balkans. So the people in the Justice Department that were in charge of finding war criminals alleged that he was in a unit that was responsible for certain atrocities that took place. So I was summoned over to the Justice Department.

Q: This is when you were in consular affairs.

NEWLIN: This is when I was in consular affairs. I was summoned over to the Justice Department. They were all ready to go ahead on the basis of the information they had collected and place Waldheim on the watch list which meant he could not get a visa. Waldheim's lawyers were saying that Waldheim at least ought to have a chance to defend himself and have legal representation. I supported that strongly. I said, yes, you may have a very strong case, but it is not American to go ahead just on this basis and not afford him a fair hearing. So that process did go forward. They did find that they were going to put him on this particular list. When I was in Vienna there he was President of Austria. This meant that no really high level meetings could take place. For instance, no Presidential visits or Vice Presidential visits. I think Grunwald had permission that he could attend the President's New Years Day reception. But other than that there was no formal contact with him.

Q: What was your impression of your sort of the political situation in Austria at the time?

NEWLIN: Austria at the time was doing very well indeed. They had succeeded of course in getting rid of the four power occupation after the war. They were doing very well economically. They had a very capable prime minister, and things were going excellently.

Q: Did you get any feel for, I think it came a little later, but this I want to say Halder, but I am not sure that is the right name. But this right wing...

NEWLIN: Oh Heider.

Q: Heider and the right wing movement within Austria.

NEWLIN: That was not as pronounced as it became later. But there was probably no doubt that that part of Tyrol down around Innsbruck and in that area, that there were plenty of Nazi sympathizers and that kind of thing.

Q: But that didn't intrude into your work.

NEWLIN: Oh no, that didn't affect us at all.

Q: Well let's talk about some of the things. What was your relationship to the nuclear non proliferation organization?

NEWLIN: Well that was the main function of the International Atomic Energy Agency. We were trying to get states, they could be members of the IAEA, but we also wanted everyone to sign the non proliferation treaty whereby they would declare that they would not become nuclear weapons states. The main holdouts were of course, the North Koreans. I had many debates with the North Koreans who kept attacking us. Then there were the Indians, the Pakistanis, South Africa, Brazil, Argentina, Iraq and Iran.

Q: What about the Israelis?

NEWLIN: The Israelis nuclear situation was well known but it was recognized that if anyone could make a case for a nuclear deterrent it was Israel. The director general of the IAEA was one Hans Blix. He was in my view, a very capable person. He certainly maintained his independence. He couldn't be pushed around by the superpowers or anything like that. He was very good at managing the IAEA.

Q: He came from where?

NEWLIN: He was a Swede. I will have more to say about him later after operation Desert Storm and the role of both the IAEA and the UN special commission on Iraq sanctions in New York which was headed by another Swede. The IAEA met at different levels. I was the resident ambassador, next were the governors who met quarterly and finally ministers annually. The governor was Dick Kennedy. I got along reasonably well with him. Then there would be a big special meeting at the ministerial level, and the Secretary of Energy used to come with a large delegation to that. The ministerial delegations would come in, and they would bring their own entourage and brief. I would have to insert myself into their staff meetings so that I could tell them about what the local political situation was in the body to which they were coming. I got along very well with the Secretary of Energy.

I might start out by saying that when I first got to Vienna, the UNVIE (United States Mission to International Organizations in Vienna) mission was very small in number. We didn't have a great huge mission. The people had to be pretty much be able to deal with a variety of things. When I got there in late '88, a Plenipotentiary conference on a treaty to combat drug trafficking was coming to a head. It was headed up by an assistant secretary by the name of Ann Wroblewski, who was a very capable negotiator. It turned out that as we got almost towards the end, she was about to have a baby, so she had to go back to Washington. I was named alternate head of the delegation, so I was the one that did the final negotiations for this particular treaty.

Q: What were the issues?

NEWLIN: The issues mainly were with the Colombians and the Andean countries who were willing to sign I guess reluctantly that they would combat or try to prevent drug smuggling and drug trafficking and also try to do something about drugs within their, so this was an issue that was hanging up. My main contribution was that the Mexicans wanted to put in some language which would weaken certain parts of the treaty, and for some reason the Canadian delegate, I think, wanted to make a name for himself, and broker a compromise. I found out that he was going around saying that the Americans really are not terribly opposed to this. It will be all right. They might make some noises, but the Americans will go along with this. So I had to finally say in one of the plenary sessions concerning this particular issue, the United States is strongly opposed. That cause him to privately explode and say well big brother is throwing his weight around. I had to do that because he was misrepresenting what our position was. So shortly after I got there, the treaty was agreed. Attorney General, General Thornburg came out and signed it. So that was really the thing that I was concentrating on when I first got there. Then we set up a UN body, the Center for Drug Trafficking in the UN, and that became another UN body that was permanent there. So I had to learn quickly the ins and outs of the drug trade business.

Q: What was the Mexican stand? Why were they trying to weaken this? Do you know?

NEWLIN: I don't know whether it was out of solidarity with the Colombians and the Bolivians or not. But they did, I forget the exact language that was going to weaken certain parts of the treaty.

Q: Did you get any feel that the Canadian representative was off on his or her own?

NEWLIN: I had the feeling that he probably was.

Q: could you sort of do a little go back to Washington and say, "Why don't you go talk to Ottawa?"

NEWLIN: I think this all came to a head so quickly there wasn't time for that. I did let Washington know what I was going to do, and Washington said, "All right, go ahead."

Q: Well then on the nuclear non proliferation, I would think, I mean the North Koreans were almost beyond the pale at that point or not?

NEWLIN: Well they were pretty obnoxious. They had signed, I believe they had signed the non proliferation treaty, but they hadn't done all of the other things under the NPT to implement the thing. So I had to natter the Russians and the Chinese and also Hans Blix to get them on board and to get them to really make sure that what they had signed up to do, that they were in the process of doing. I remember one session where the North Korean representative gave a long vitriolic speech about the United States and how it was gravely endangering North Korea. So finally I said, "I want to assure the representatives of North Korea that as long as they live up to the international obligations they have undertaken under the UN Charter and the other international agreements that they have signed, that they are in no danger whatsoever from the United States." They continued to be a problem.

Q: How about I mean just from slight personal experience, but dealing with the Pakistanis and Indians Of course for both of those a major nuclear development was a major thing. Now as we speak today both sides have got nuclear capable missiles. They could be very difficult in the negotiations. How did you find them at that time?

NEWLIN: Both of their representatives were very capable diplomats and personal relations were very good. We knew what their position was. Blix had a dinner, a private dinner at his residence one evening, and he had the Pakistanis and the Indians. I was there; the British were there. I think the French, and I believe the Germans as well. It was a rather small group. The idea was that the people that had signed the NPT were encouraging them to do so. It was all very friendly, and nobody raised their voices. Both the Indians and the Pakistanis had a rationale as to why this was not in their interests. This was something that the Western powers had cooked up and that they were not going to go along.

Q: Well what was in it, let's say you are India or Pakistan and you say I am not going to sign the treaty. What difference would it make? Could they just sort of do their own thing or were there penalties for not signing?

NEWLIN: There were penalties in that they were not eligible for peaceful nuclear assistance. The whole deal, and the rationale for the IAEA and non proliferation treaty regime was that we understand your desire to have nuclear power and the benefits of nuclear power. You can have that for peaceful purposes as long as you sign the NPT. If you sign the NPT you have to submit to inspection, your reactors and your research facilities and other things where there is substantial nuclear material must be accounted for and must be periodically verified by the IAEA. So they did forego that. Then so far as I know, I don't think anyone cheated on them by giving them things. Eventually it turned out they were able on their own. Their scientists were just as capable as other scientists in developing their nuclear weapons. The basic weapons technology was well known.

Q: Was Libya part of the problem at the time?

NEWLIN: Libya. I don't think they were then. The activities of the rogue Pakistani proliferation didn't come out until much later.

Q: How about Iran?

NEWLIN: Iran too was not a major factor then. Interestingly enough South Africa was. The South Africans, at a high level came to town, I think the prime minister himself, came to Vienna and met secretly our mission with Kennedy.

Q: Richard Kennedy.

NEWLIN: Yes, and they wanted to know that if they were to sign the NPT and agree to dismantle anything to do with a weaponization program, how long a period would elapse. They wanted to pin that down. It was a very fascinating thing. So Kennedy and the other U.S. experts were able to answer their questions, and they went back to South Africa. Then eventually they did announce that they were getting out of the Nuclear business. And also the Brazilians and the Argentineans did the same thing.

Q: Something that is sort of forgotten today, but Brazil and Argentina somehow got into this to put it in diplomatic terms, almost a pissing contest over developing nuclear weapons. We were thinking Oh my God. Because they didn't particularly have any complaints...

NEWLIN: Issues, there were no burning issues at all. Then Qadhafi of course secretly had his thing out in the desert. We didn't know about it at the time. I was amazed years after I left Algeria, that Algeria too had worked on a nuclear weapons plant. They decided to give that up too, because they had no use to waste money on that.

Q: Okay, let's come to Israel. I mean this. Here is this thing where we often use the double standard. The Israelis as of today, I don't think they have admitted they have got nuclear weapons, but everybody knows they have a substantial program. How did we deal with that?

NEWLIN: Oddly enough people just figured well the situation that the Israelis have, if anybody could justify nuclear weapons on the basis of survival, it would be them. Of course we knew from intelligence sources and everything at Dimona where they had their reactors and everything that they were developing nuclear weapons. Something we made a decision not to make an issue over. Others didn't either. Even the Arabs, it never really became a big issue in the IAEA. Sadat had started normalizing relations with Israel and the Saudis had so much oil they did not need nuclear reactors.

Q: Well moving from the nuclear side, what was happening at UNRWA?

NEWLIN: The United Nations Relief and Works Agency. Before we go to UNRWA, I will mention that Kennedy had permission to negotiate agreements with countries that had signed the NPT for additional bilateral assistance for peaceful purposes. So I found out that he was going to go off to Moscow to talk to the Russians. I said, "Well may I join you?" and he said, "Yes." That was a very interesting thing. The Russians rolled out the red carpet for him.

Q: These were the Soviets at the time.

NEWLIN: Yes, the Soviet Union at the time. They rolled out the red carpet for him. Then he followed up on that. There were agreements signed with the Czechs and I believe the Hungarians as well. This was a side thing that was going on. The main thing of course was after Desert Storm when Saddam was defeated, and then the UN sanctions operations got going in New York. There was difficulty between the two heads of these agencies, the IAEA in Vienna headed by Blix, UNSCOM in New York headed by Ekeus, both were Swedish diplomats. Ekeus took the position that he reported only to the Security Council. He didn't report to the Secretary General of the UN. He said that he was really to be in charge of all of the destruction of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Well that didn't sit well with Blix and the IAEA. He said, "We are the ones that have the nuclear expertise, and so we are the ones to do that." So there was quite a bit of dispute between the two. I tried as best I could to make peace between them. It finally wound up by having joint groups go out. Bob Gallucci who later became assistant secretary in PM went out with David Kay, who at that time was working for Blix in the IAEA. So we had a joint group going out there. The UNSCOM and IAEA blew up and destroyed all of the nuclear facilities that Saddam had secretly built for the weapons program. We also, this was later on when I was in UNSCOM in New York, we destroyed masses of chemical weapons, mustard gas and Sarin, a nerve gas, as well as anything else that we could find. It wasn't until later, remember the time two sons in law of Saddam defected and went to Jordan. They told us about some of the chemical and biological program. The Anthrax thing that we hadn't found before. This was something that went on.

UNRRA was set up shortly after the creation of Israel when large numbers of Palestinians were uprooted from their ancestral homes in Palestine and decided to flee from what was under Israeli control. So large refugee camps were located in the west bank and Gaza, and then also in Jordan and Lebanon. The UN and other powers said, "Well the United States by its recognition of Israel and so forth helped create this problem, so therefore the United States will have to pay for it." So we did get some other countries to pay as well, but it was largely a U.S. thing. So that meant that a U.S. person headed it. I think it was Eagleton, Bill Eagleton, who was the head of it while I was there. He was a very distinguished foreign service officer, an Arabist. It just sort of ran itself at that time, the Intifada had not started in Gaza. It was mainly just making sure that the refugee camps and the refugee program was properly carried out. This was the United Nations Relief and Reconstruction Agency.

Q: It was started right after WWII, because I remember we used to deal with it when I was in Germany.

NEWLIN: Yes.

Q: Mike, what effect did the breakup essentially of the huge Soviet bloc in December of '89, and all that happened on you. How did that, in the first place it was sort of a rolling thing, and then the Soviet Union disintegrated.

NEWLIN: It was absolutely fascinating. I am glad you asked about that because my wife of course, was born in Prague. After the communist coup in 1948 she escaped to West Germany. Having been a refugee from communism she was fascinated. In Vienna we had a ringside seat to everything that was going on across the borders in Czechoslovakia and Hungary. I remember on one of my early trips to Moscow was then I was in consular affairs in the late '80s. I was asked to go there to make a presentation on foreign travel regulations. I was part of a larger delegation that was going to talk about a whole range of security issues. We had a meeting at the embassy before our meetings with the Soviets. So they went down the list of things. The embassy deputy chief of mission said, "Oh yeah there won't be any problem to that. The Russians will agree to that. Oh yeah they will make some noises but they will agree to it." So I couldn't believe my ears. At the end of this I said, "Well now this is extraordinary. I have been told that the Russians are extremely difficult negotiators to deal with, but that finally when you get the agreement, that they do carry it out."

Q: We are really talking about the Soviets.

NEWLIN: The Soviets. This is Gorbachev. We are talking about Gorbachev. "They have come to the conclusion that society is sick and that it has to be radically reformed. You will find them agreeable." That was the beginning of for me the insight that things were indeed changing. What was your question?

Q: I was just thinking being there in Vienna, I mean in the first place I think the real opening was when the Hungarians basically opened up their borders.

NEWLIN: You are so right. That was the beginning of the opening of the floodgates. It was known then that, or believed, that Gorbachev and his group were telling the satellite countries that you are on your own. You better look to your own perestroika and glasnost. The East Germans could go to Hungary without any problem in the Soviet era. So hundreds and thousands of them went to Hungary with the idea then that some how they would get to Austria. This put the Austrians in a very difficult situation indeed. The Hungarians were unprepared to take care of all of these people. Finally the Austrians agreed that they could cross the Danube and come in. They did, they flooded in, and eventually the West Germany government accepted them.

Something similar happened in Prague before the velvet revolution. East Germany could also freely go to communist Czechoslovakia. Once there, they headed for the West German embassy and climbed over the wall. So they camped out. There were hundreds and hundreds of them in the garden there. Finally the West Germans said that they would take them. They sent trains, and then they got out. But this was a fascinating thing to see all of these refugees. They abandoned their Trabant cars in the streets of Prague. But towards the end, just before the velvet revolution was happening in Prague, my wife and I would go over to Bratislava which was the capital of Slovakia. We even surreptitiously participated in some demonstrations, anti Soviet demonstrations.

Q: Were you jangling keys?

NEWLIN: Yes. Milena would say, "Get your keys out." I would get the keys out. So that was absolutely fascinating, to be there to see this happen.

Q: Were the organizations, I would have imagined the whole UN apparatus in Vienna was almost transfixed by this.

NEWLIN: All of us were.

Q: All of you were international observers, but all of a sudden you were in the middle of a peaceful revolution but a real revolution.

NEWLIN: That's right. It was the collapse of the Soviet empire. The evolution of course started out years before in Poland, and the Hungarians in 1956. The Hungarians had revolted and the Soviets invaded. Then the Poles were the leaders for awhile. Then finally the East Germans, but this influx of all of these people then finally led to the collapse.

Q: How about with the organizations you were working with? They all had East German components, Czech components? You know in other words, their representatives must have been sort of bewildered. Who am I reporting to? How am I going to keep my job?

NEWLIN: Exactly. I am sure that was a major thing with the Russians. They didn't know whether they were going to be thrown out, cashiered. The wife of the Russian ambassador while all of this was going on, particularly the things in Moscow, the Russian ambassador's wife told my wife, "Well I wondered whether I would be coming to you and asking for asylum."

Q: Yes. Well did that affect the workings of the various organizations?

NEWLIN: No. The people there, the Russian Ambassador, Roland Timerbaev was a very capable ambassador. He wasn't Russian at all. He was a Bashir. But he was a well known ambassador. They went along and worked with us, and we got things done.

Q: I never quite understood your job there. You are the ambassador to the UN organizations. You have these organizations all of whom have I suppose essentially for the Americans somebody like Richard Kennedy, who was sort of the head of those delegations. How did you relate to these organizations. I mean were you an administrative head or more than that?

NEWLIN: Well now, because we had ongoing things in all of these bodies. The IAEA we had meetings, well practically every day dealing with budgetary things and other things dealing with non proliferation. Then there was this other organization I mentioned called UNIDO. That was supposed to promote industrial development in underdeveloped countries. Where they got their money was some large agency would decide that something ought to be built in some undeveloped country. Then they would subcontract this to UNIDO, and UNIDO would collect money from the sponsoring organizations. Eventually people decided that wasn't a very practical way to do things and so they would make other arrangements. So UNIDO was phased out. I might say something on the Commission on the Status of Women, and the U.S. delegate there was one Maureen Reagan. She was something else. So I had to meet Maureen.

Q: She was at that point former President Reagan's daughter.

NEWLIN: That's right. So she used her clout. There came up an issue in the document that they were drafting that should be a statute or treaty on the status of women. The Canadian representative was being unhelpful to Maureen. So Maureen gets on the phone and calls up the minister in Ottawa that dealt with this and said, "Look, this person is being unhelpful to me. This won't do." The minister said, "Yes, Maureen, that's right, No, you are right." So the next morning they are going into the meeting; Maureen ran into the Canadian representative. The Canadian representative said, "We have to talk." Maureen said, "We don't have to talk. I am telling you what your instructions are." So that was Maureen.

Q: How did you find dealing with her?

NEWLIN: I got along with her all right. She was really something else. But I fortunately got along with Maureen.

Q: Where was she coming from? I mean you know, on the issues?

NEWLIN: Well she was very interested in doing something to improve the status of women. She was living in the White House with the Reagans. So she could see the President any time she wanted to, and people knew that. She had an interest in women's things. Substantively she probably was entirely right on this as far as I could tell. I gather she could be difficult to work for.

Q: Well then let's see. Did the problem of contraception, birth control come up?

NEWLIN: That, fortunately, did not boil up in our deliberations. After the drug treaty was signed we had to set up in Vienna the UN Commission on Drug Trafficking. Since the Italians had been very helpful in the negotiations an Italian was the head of that. So we worked very closely with them. I accompanied him on his first visit to Washington. We called on the attorney general who had signed the treaty. We got that up and running.

To answer your question. I was the US representative to all of the UN agencies in Vienna including the IAEA. As mentioned, it met at three different levels but I represented the United States at all but a small number of meetings.

Q: Well then did you find you were there between, you came in under the Reagan administration and then the Bush I administration came in. How did you keep your job?

NEWLIN: Good question. I of course, was fortunate in that I knew the new president personally. But I got there just before the election. So when the election was over, there is a time honored rule that when you have ambassadorial or other appointment where you have to be confirmed by the senate, that you submit a letter of resignation. So all of us of course, were wondering what was going to happen. We got a telegram then from the State Department saying the President has decided that all career ambassadors will stay at their posts for their normal tour of duty. Since I had just arrived, that was very good news. It was not too long into the new administration, my secretary burst in and said, "The President on the line." I said, "Oh, that is nice." I picked up the phone. "Mike, I would like you to go as my ambassador to Luxembourg." I said, "Well Mr. President that is very nice. Let me think that over. I have just arrived in this new job, and we have got this big problem setting up the new anti-drug commission. May I think it over. I will go and talk it over with Milena." He said, "Yes, you do that Mike." Then I sent him a back channel, Ambassadors can send a back channel messages directly to him. I said I was honored but I thought I could be more useful in Vienna. He came back and said, "I understand your position, and I agree with it, and I am very proud to have you as my friend." There is a delicate thing telling the president that you didn't want to accept an ambassadorial appointment. But I had no interest in, with all that was going on in Vienna.

Q: You had real issues.

NEWLIN: The really bug issues. The collapse of the Soviet empire and Desert Storm, were yet to come. We had four resident ambassadors in Vienna. Steve Ledogar was negotiating a chemicals weapons treaty. He came to me and said, "Mike, did you see that telegram from the Department saying we have got to submit a letter of resignation?" I said, "Yes, that is standard. We all have to do that. You can put in the letter anything you want to, but it also must have Mr. President, I submit my resignation at a date to be decided at your convenience." I said, "But you can fill the letter with all that you are doing and all that you hope to do, but you must have that in there." So he did that. He was at a dinner that evening with his Russian counterpart who was a rather dour man, didn't have very much small talk. He said, "Well I resigned today." The Russian replied, "You did? Why did you do that." He then explained what the custom was. The Russian said, "That is a very strange system." Ledogar said, "Well it beats a knock on the door at 2:00 A.M. The Russian laughed.

Then while I was there, Jim Woolsey who later went on to be head of CIA was head of the CSCE. We were in the same building. Negotiations on the status of conventional weapons in Europe had dragged on for years with the Russians on reducing non nuclear armaments. Finally under Gorbachev and Shevardnadze agreement had been reached. We had a high level Congressional delegation coming to be briefed just before the signing, to take place in Paris. I was invited to come down and sit in in case anything would come up on the nuclear side. Woolsey had a large staff with admirals and generals and all sorts of experts. They got up and said, "Now this is an historic thing. It is not going to be a 50-50 thing. It is going to be asymmetric, because the Russians are of course, very close to Western Europe, they will have to reduce larger amounts and of course redeploy their weapons." They gave the figures which made it sound like it was an extraordinary deal for NATO. A junior representative from the Congressional delegation from Georgia, Newt Gingrich, said, "Do you believe the Russians are really going to do that?" Woolsey said what I remarked earlier. "They are difficult to negotiate with, but once they agree, they do carry it out." Gingrich shook his head and said, "Well all I have got to say is if I was a Russian, I wouldn't sign that." So they did go off to Paris, sign the thing, and then right away word came from Moscow that Woolsey had better get himself to Moscow because the Russians couldn't carry out all the provisions. So Woolsey had to go there. In the negotiations with the Russian generals kept explaining, "Look we cannot. It is just impossible to do all of this within this time frame." Woolsey said, "This treaty will be changed over my dead body." The Russian had never heard that expression before and he said, "What is he talking about, his dead body?" Then the Russian said, "Da, Da, it will be over your dead body." The Russian deployments were worked out and Woolsey survived and went on to head the CIA.

Q: Well tell me though, let's talk about you were there when Saddam Hussein and Iraq invaded Kuwait. How did that affect what you all were doing?

NEWLIN: Right. It affected the UN greatly. The basic Security Council resolution authorizing the use of force was to oust Saddam from Kuwait. It did not envisage the invasion of Iraq or the ouster of Saddam. As part of the cease fire, Iraq agreed the UN would find and destroy all weapons of mass destruction. A special UN commission on Iraq sanctions, UNSCOM, was set up and was to report to the security council rather than to Boutros Gali, the secretary general. Though not spelled out, it was generally understood the IAEA would play a role since it had inspected the Iraqi nuclear reactor under the NPT. UNSCOM was headed by Rolf Ekeus, a Swedish diplomat. The IAEA was headed by Hans Blix, another Swede. The question between these two Swedish diplomats, both of whom had sizable egos, what was the pecking order.

Q: This was between New York and Vienna.

NEWLIN: Blix in Vienna and Ekeus in New York. I got drawn into this. I tried to say well we can work this out, have joint teams. The nuclear experts from here can go, and then Ekeus had recruited some nuclear experts of his own as well. I said, "This has to be a joint operation and we have to work together." That is the way it did in fact work. But then to our great surprise the Iraqis, once this system got started, admitted that they had secretly produced some plutonium from their reactor. So that was a tip off that they did have nuclear weapons ambition. They admitted that to the IAEA. I reported that immediately. Then later on Gallucci, from UNSCOM, and Kay, from the IAEA, inspected a building that they went to in Baghdad on short notice, kicked the door down and went in. They found documents in there that indicated there was a program for nuclear weapons. Gallucci and Kay were out at what was supposed to be a place where tanks and other conventional things were. It was all behind a high fence. They were denied entrance although they were supposed to under the terms of the agreement to have the right to go anywhere they wanted to go. So they climbed up on a high structure and looked in. They could see that the Iraqis were feverishly loading something on trucks, large pieces of things on trucks. They started out the gate with them. The UN people followed them until the Iraqis fired over their heads and made them stop. It turned out these were great huge magnets called calutrons which we had used to develop our first weapon. So that was something. We then found out later that they had a pilot centrifuge as well which was much more efficient. Outside Baghdad was a large new facility where the research was going on and also where I think the centrifuge project was going. Blix said, "Well we don't have to destroy everything, we can just clean it out." The Iraqis said they wanted to turn the building into a school and a library. I took the position that the whole thing had to be destroyed, so they did blow it up.

Q: How did you get along with Blix?

NEWLIN: I got along with Blix all right. One thing, I had to do was I had to try to get as many capable Americans on his staff whenever a vacancy would come up. Sometimes I succeeded and sometimes I didn't. He wasn't going to be pushed around. But I thought he was a very capable person. I think he was very badly used by the administration later on in the run up to the Iraq invasion. The UN brought him out of retirement and put him in charge of a beefed up inspection operation. Of course they couldn't find any weapons of mass destruction because Saddam had secretly destroyed them.

Q: Well is there anything else we should cover?

NEWLIN: I think we have covered all the main things during my career as a Foreign Service officer. I reached the age of 65 in May of '91, so I had to formally retire from the foreign service at that time, but I could stay in Vienna until September until my tour was up. I left then in September of '91.

Q: Then after retirement just briefly what have you been up to?

NEWLIN: Well I would like if I could crave your indulgence, I would like to explain what I did afterwards because that was for me perhaps the most important part of my career with the State Department. I was rehired as a rehired annuitant. I came back to the Department and I worked in the bureau of political military affairs. I got involved in the Nunn Lugar program to control nuclear material in the former states of the Soviet Union that had nuclear weapons and facilities on their territories. There is a considerable tale to that. I also wound up in New York as Ekeus' deputy, my Swedish friend. I had so much trouble with, little did I know that one day I would be his deputy in New York. Then I also became an acting deputy assistant secretary of state in PM dealing with arms sales, so I had a whole new career after that.

Q: Let's talk about the UN. How did you find Ekeus and what were you doing?

NEWLIN: Well I found Ekeus to be very competent and skilled. He was marvelous in his ability to be autonomous in this major UN undertaking. Secretary General Boutros Ghali thought that Ekeus ought to report to him. Ekeus said no, I report to the Security Council that appointed me. Since the presidency of the security council rotated monthly, he had no permanent superior. So we had Russians on our staff. We had various nationalities. This is where my experience in Vienna with the IAEA came in handy because I knew the whole cast of characters. I knew David Kay and the others and their specialties. So one of my contributions was to get the U.S. to release imagery from our satellites so that Russian experts from Moscow could show us where they modified the scuds so they could reach all the way to Tel Aviv. Where those factories were. At first Washington said, no, Russians were not allowed to see such detailed satellite images. Finally we broke through that barrier.

Q: So most of your work with Ekeus was essentially dealing with disarmament of Iraq.

NEWLIN: That's right. That was our mission. And as I say we had a huge program going to destroy the munitions with mustard gas and nerve gas.

Q: That had to be a very tricky thing.

NEWLIN: A tricky thing. You had to have experts that knew what they were doing on that. We were destroying our own excess chemical weapons out on Johnston Island. That was a big deal. You had to transport it and the environmentalists were up in arms. But we would get all of this and were going along lickety-split in Iraq. And as I say we found out about all of their nuclear things. When Ekeus was on leave in Sweden I was in charge of the whole operation in New York, including scheduling the inspections.

Q: How did you find being part of an arm of the UN in New York bureaucratically?

NEWLIN: Under Ekeus it was wonderful. Because we had our own administrative set up we didn't have to really get involved with the UN any more than going to work in the UN Building, and reporting periodically to the security council.

Q: Well then what were you doing in Washington?

NEWLIN: Before I left Vienna I sent a back channel letter to President Bush, the current President Bush's father. I described what I had done there, and then I said I would be very interested if it would be possible to be of assistance anywhere in your administration that you think I could be useful. So I got a very nice letter back from him that said, "Mike, I have taken note of your interest and I have let the appropriate people here know." That was all he said. So I came back as part of the retirement seminar, which is a wonderful thing the Department does. I am sure you went through it too. I got back here, and we were all waiting in the Acheson Auditorium. Larry Williamson was in personnel at that time. When he saw me and he said, "Mike we have to talk." I said, "Oh, yeah, good." He said that when Director General Perkins and Ron Spiers, undersecretary for administration, went over to the White House to consult with President Bush on the new ambassadorial appointments that would be the career people. Larry said President Bush said, "I don't see Mike Newlin on the list." Perkins and Spiers reportedly said, "Oh, we will take care of Mike." That led to a contract as a rehired annuitant. They didn't know what to do with me so they assigned me to the undersecretary's office of security and military affairs. On reporting, I was asked to head the interagency group on supercomputers. Joe Presel, who used to work for me in IO, was leaving this position.

Q: I have started an interview with Joe. I haven't finished the damn thing.

NEWLIN: He is delightful. Isn't he a delightful person. I said, "Joe, I don't know anything about super computers."

Q: These are the Quay computers?

NEWLIN: Cray. They do 150 million operations a minute. Can you imagine such a thing? The Japanese had independently developed their own super computers. So we had a bilateral regime with the Japanese that we would agree on who would get super computers. It had to be a reliable company that wouldn't try to find out what the workings of the super computer were, and would not apply them to military use. So Joe turned this operation over to me. The first thing I did, I went down to Cray's office to get a briefing. They told me about the capabilities of all of this. So during my tenure there, the Indians said they wanted to buy a super computer for weather forecasting. They are very useful for weather forecasting among other things. So Cray was all for this. Cray said, "We can work this thing out so that it can have a line from the computer in India to our headquarters. It will tell us if anybody tries to tamper with the computer for non approved activities." But my own feelings and the feelings of my inter departmental group were that we weren't about to trust the Indians on this with good reason. It turned out the Indians, just as we developed our own nuclear weapons without a super computer, could do it.

After a while, it was decided I should go to political military affairs, PM. Richard Clarke was the assistant secretary. He later became the counterterrorism chief in the White House and was the person who said on 9/11, "This is al Qaeda." Later in Congressional testimony he apologized to 9/11 members for the failure to foresee and forestall the attack. He asked me what I would like to do. I said, "Well, since I have a background in UN affairs, if Bob Gallucci, who was Ekeus' deputy in New York, leaves for any reason, I would be interested in going up there. Otherwise, anything to do with helping the former Soviet Union and the newly independent nuclear states in the non proliferation business, I would be very interested in doing that." So sitting in my office one day I was told Clarke would like to see you. I went up. He said, "Gallucci tells me that he has either got to come back to Washington or get a divorce. Mike would you go up and replace him?" I said, "Well I will go up temporarily until you can find a permanent replacement there." So I went up and I was there for about nine months. That began my relationship with UNSCOM. I guess if it is all right with you I would like to stop there because this is a convenient place. Then I can talk the next time about all that I did to negotiate export control regimes in Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Belarus.

Q: All right, we will do that. Today is 10 January 2007. Mike, put me back in the picture now. We are talking about you are going up to the UN. When did you go up there?

NEWLIN: I went up to the UN in I think it was February of '92. I had, I think I had mentioned to you earlier when I first came back as a rehired annuitant, they asked me what I wanted to do when I was assigned to PM. I said, Well, with my UN background, if Gallucci ever wants to come back to Washington I would be interested in doing something like that. Since I had been of course ambassador to the IAEA, and I had a background in nuclear matters. Or, I said, "I would be interested in doing anything that would deal with the problems that we have in the nuclear sector with the former Soviet Union." Dick Clarke said, "Gallucci has got to come back here, so would you go up?" I was delighted to say yes.

Q: Well what was the situation, to put us back in the picture, what was the situation vis a vis at this point it was now the former Soviet Union but it had just happened or had it not?

NEWLIN: Yes, it had just happened, the dissolution. That had quite a lot to do with export controls in that whole area.

Q: When you say export controls what do you mean?

NEWLIN: The establishment of effective export control systems. But that was something that I really got into deeply after the UN time that I was up there.

Q: Ok, so we will move into the...

NEWLIN: The UN where I was there for about nine months. UNSCOM is the abbreviation for the UN Special Commission on Iraq sanctions. After Desert Storm and the various things that were imposed by the Security Council on Iraq, was a system of UN inspections to root out the weapons of mass destruction and destroy those that were found. The UN special commission was established as a sub body under the Security Council. It was headed by a Swedish diplomat Rolf Ekeus, who was a very competent diplomat. Bob Gallucci had been his deputy. I became the deputy executive chairman under Ekeus with the rank of assistance secretary general. And the senior U.S. person in UNSCOM. Our job was to cover all of the weapons of mass destruction that had been accumulated over the years by Saddam. The particular focus of course, was on the nuclear side. At that time we had discovered and were destroying vast quantities of nerve gas, serum, and mustard gas in addition to going after the nuclear materials. The Iraqis were charged under the instructions from the UN to come clean and report everything that they had done in the nuclear field. This, they dragged their feet on and said that all that they had was a nuclear reactor which they claimed was for generation of power which had been bombed by the Israelis earlier. It was a French reactor. Even though that had damaged the reactor, the highly enriched fuel was still there. So the first order of business was to get that particular fuel and get that turned over to the IAEA. Then to get the fuel rods out of the reactor and send those off to Russia. Then we began trying to find out just what they had been up to. It turned out that not only were they planning to use calutrons, which were great big magnets which we had used as one of the things to produce our first nuclear weapon, but they also had a program that was fairly far advanced, with centrifuges made of maraging steel. Also they had gone into producing a form of lithium which you need to trigger a nuclear device. All of this had been discovered by previous inspections led by Gallucci from New York and also the famous David Kay from the IAEA in Vienna. The inspections were supposed to be a joint operation between UNSCOM in New York and IAEA in Vienna.

My experience in the time that I was there was that our intelligence on Iraq was just terrible. Remember we had no real penetration through all of the intelligence agencies that we had, really what they had or what they were up to in this area. One example was, and of course you had CIA, DIA, NSA and who knows what else, having all of the analysts, and they weren't coming up with anything. So we kept getting false leads. There was one large building out from Baghdad. It looked like sort of a palace with two reflecting pools out in front of it. We got word that this was no doubt a subterranean nuclear facility. These were cooling pools from reactors and that kind of thing. So we got the people lined up and the inspectors went out. It was a surprise operation.. We didn't tell the Iraqi government where we were going that day. Then once we got outside of Baghdad we went there. Then the big altercation arose would they be allowed in eventually? We were allowed in. It was just one of the many palaces that Saddam had built. It was completely empty inside. There was nothing to it.

Then another one was an agent said that there was a place down near the river which was producing nuclear material. So we went down there. It turned out that it just wasn't true at all. On the other hand, the Russians of course, had provided a lot of military equipment over the years to Iraq including scud missiles. So the Russians were very helpful to us by telling us first of all how many scuds they had delivered, where they were being modified by the Iraqis and so forth. So that part went very well.

Q: Well did you feel that speaking of how the Russians were there, was concern of leakage of expertise or information from the former Soviet Union to Iraq at that time?

NEWLIN: Well I wouldn't be surprised if the Russians had not been involved in some of the technical aspects of modifying the scuds beyond the range that they would normally have. If you recall, during Desert Storm, Iraq launched several scuds towards Israel. Of course one of them did manage to hit Tel Aviv. Several of them broke up in flight. The modification was not technically very good. We deployed the Patriot anti-missile system to Israel but I have the impression it did not hit any Iraqi scuds.

Q: Well did you feel that the Russians were really were not a participant in nuclear development?

NEWLIN: Yes. I am positive that the Russians did nothing to try to help them on the nuclear side because the Russians and us, it goes back to the founding during the cold war, of the IAEA to prevent, to promote peaceful nuclear activities but to combat proliferation. I am sure the Russians were not involved.

Q: This is one place where the United States and the Soviet Union were in agreement.

NEWLIN: Absolutely. Even during the worst days of the Cold War.

Q: We have got these nuclear toys but we don't want anybody else to have them.

NEWLIN: That's right. Well the Russians did make a mistake I believe right after communists took over in China. I think they did help the Chinese, and then of course when their relations soured, that was a big mistake that they figured they had made. When China then became a nuclear power, that was something that they had contributed to. The Chinese would have done that anyway, but it would have taken longer.

Q: Did you have any concern about two rather aggressive mercantile countries at that time, France and Germany, at least maybe not as government policy, but firms in those countries supplying the Iraqis with know how, material and all?

NEWLIN: There were occasional instances where we discovered through intelligence that some German firms were violating the sanctions. We would report this to the Germans and they would take appropriate actions to turn it off. We didn't make a great public issue of it. Nothing appeared in the newspapers or anything like that.

Q: How did France play in this equation?

NEWLIN: France was not I think a major player. France had done the initial reactor, that is true. They had furnished the highly enriched uranium from their own production for that. But I don't recall that they were a major problem.

Q: What about at the time, I mean the Soviet Union had just broken up, so you had its component parts particularly Kazakhstan and Ukraine and Belarus. Was there concern at the UN about leakage from these particular areas?

NEWLIN: Yes. There certainly was. But that was being dealt with outside the Iraq sanctions operations because as I say, the Russians were on board with the sanctions and with helping us do whatever needed to be done to deal with the weapons of mass destruction. We also suspected that there was a biological component. We asked them about anthrax and other biological elements. They said, "Oh yes we have small amounts of anthrax for veterinarian purposes." But that is all. It wasn't until two sons in law of Saddam Hussein defected, at the time they defected and went with their families to Jordan. They were debriefed there. They filled us in that there was quite a significant anthrax program. We were able as a result of that to root that out. But Tariq Aziz was the designated person by Saddam to come to New York and Brief the Security Council as to what they were doing. But we had to constantly threaten them that unless they did do what we wanted to do under the Security Council resolutions, we would have to report their non compliance with the Security Council. They were very much trying to show that they were cooperating albeit reluctantly, the idea being that they wanted to get the sanctions lifted which among other things restricted oil exports.

Q: What was sort of the attitude particularly at the top of the UN? What was the feeling from your Swedish head of your section plus your own feeling and people around you about what were the Iraqis up to? Do you think that they, was there even the opportunity give the state of inspection and what you saw for them really to develop a nuclear program?

NEWLIN: Oh yes. They were if desert Storm had not come along, they would, it would have taken awhile. Of course it is no, you can produce fissile material, but then weaponization of that is another big step. They did have the calutrons already in operation when Desert Storm started. They stopped that and dismantled them. Gallucci and David Kay found out about those when they were moving them around. Later on we found out that they had set up centrifuges, and they were ready to start on the centrifuges. That is a much more efficient way to produce fissile material. We had no idea that they were doing this at all, that they had been able to do this. It shows you the difficulty that people have now trying to deal with the Iranian program because you can hide these things relatively easily. One of the main things that happened that I was involved in was once we had discovered the sites where the nuclear activity was going on, they had to be destroyed. The Iraqis tried to persuade the IAEA to take out and destroy the nuclear part, but leave the buildings because we would like to turn those into schools. So I took the position that anything that was related to the nuclear program had to be completely destroyed. That is what we finally did with UNSCOM and the IAEA.

Q: How did you find, I would have thought the Israelis would have had quite an intelligence operation in there. Did they or not?

NEWLIN: I have the impression that Israel, like everyone else, did not have a significant intelligence operation in Iraq. Somehow Israel discovered Iraq building an enormous cannon in a hillside in western Iraq that could reach Israel. They discovered the European in charge of the project and assassinated him in Belgium. The Israelis did tell us about the German firm's intention to sell maraging steel for centrifuges but I suppose that came from their operations in Germany, not in Iraq.

Q: Did much intelligence seem to be coming out? Did anyone else have good intelligence?

NEWLIN: No, we were completely in the dark. We were doing everything that we could to, then somebody said, "Well we have got to test the river. We have got to test the Euphrates because maybe some nuclear traces can be found there. I think we got a French group that came in with their wet suits and everything and went into the river and came up with samples. Nothing ever turned up that way.

Q: How did you view Tariq Aziz? He had been sort of the front man?

NEWLIN: He was the front man. I guess he was foreign minister.

Q: He was foreign minister, deputy prime minister. He had various jobs but essentially he was always the front man.

NEWLIN: And A Christian. That is right.

Q: How did you view him?

NEWLIN: I thought he was very slick. He tried to present a reasonable face. He was very personable, and knew how to deal with westerners. "Oh we are cooperating, yes we are trying. It is difficult to come up with some of these facts and figures, but we are working on it. Our nuclear program was for peaceful purposes only, and had nothing to do with all that." Lies.

Q: What was your impression at this point of the operation of the UN?

NEWLIN: Well, UNSCOM was a unique body with well defined objectives set up under unique circumstances. I have already mentioned that Ekeus took the position that he reported only to the security council, a 15 member body whose presidency rotated. UNSCOM's reports were well received. It also enjoyed administrative autonomy because Iraq paid for it. Prior to the invasion, Hans Blix was charged with conducting a beefed up inspection operation. When he reported that he had not found any nuclear weapons Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz were not pleased and a report was leaked that Wolfowitz had asked the CIA for a report on Blix. After the invasion the Pentagon mounted a massive search which also came up empty handed. Then David Kay was charged to assemble another large inspection body. David reported to Congress that Iraq had no nuclear weapons. It would be interesting to know how much these operations cost.

Q: Well looking at this, you have been in and out of the UN from time to time, could there be an effective Secretary General or was it such that the organization had become dysfunctional?

NEWLIN: It is almost impossible now. When you know the early days back in the 60's and early 70's membership was around 60. What is it now, 180 members? I remember the delegation complaining whenever the decolonization took place, and it was going up to 60 members. It is going to make it difficult for us to muster our majorities. There are some things that the UN can do, and there has been creative. There are some things they do very well on the humanitarian side. I think Kofi Anan, he has not been perfect, but Kofi Anan has helped restore in certain areas what the UN can do. Unfortunately he was put in charge of the bigger task than he could effectively supervise within existing resources. The head of the operation under Anan was accused of gross mismanagement.

Q: When you were doing this, this would have been during the Clinton administration just came, or it hadn't come in?

NEWLIN: It came in while I was in New York in '92. The election took place.

Q: Well then you left that in what early '93?

NEWLIN: Yes, in the fall of '92, I came back to Washington. By that time there had been a big change in PM. Dick Clarke had run afoul of Mr. Funk the inspector General who accused Clarke of not following up on some intelligence, something that the Israelis were alleged up to. I don't know why. So Dick Clarke was eased out of PM.

Q: Dick Clarke was head of?

NEWLIN: He was the assistant secretary of state for political military affairs. He was eased out, but he wound up over in the White House as their counterterrorism expert. Bob Gallucci had recently been appointed to replace Clarke when the election took place. The Clinton transition team asked Gallucci if he would stay on. Bob said, "Yes." He hadn't been in the job for long, he would stay on. Then later on the transition group began to make decisions to which career people would leave and where the political appointees would come in. They started harassing Gallucci and they said, "Where is your letter of resignation?" So Gallucci called a group of us together. I said, "You should tell them that the transition team earlier asked you to stay on, and you agreed. That was the agreement between you and the transition." So they finally dropped that, and he did stay on then.

Q: What did you do?

NEWLIN: After Clarke wound up over at the White House, he persuaded Rand Beers to join him as his deputy. Have you interviewed him?

Q: I haven't finished, but I started.

NEWLIN: Okay, well Rand Beers was the deputy assistant secretary for export for munitions licensing and policy which was the largest group in PM which issued licenses for the export of military equipment. This all goes back many years when Congress passed a law saying the State Department would be responsible for licensing military items. Of course it all had to be coordinated with Defense and with the other appropriate agencies. A big thing. So I had to quickly learn all about export controls, first of all the laws and then the regulations. Then I was doing that, when Bob Einhorn who was the person that Gallucci relied on for anything to do with nuclear matters, Bob Einhorn came into my office one day and said, "Mike, would you be willing to lead a delegation to Kazakhstan to explain to them export controls?" I said, "I would be delighted to do that." So we put together a delegation under the Nunn Lugar program which was one of the most far-sighted pieces of legislation that was done to deal with problems resulting from the collapse of the Soviet Union. The Nunn Lugar program was to secure and prevent the proliferation of nuclear materials. The heart was the safe and secure dismantlement of nuclear weapons in Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Belarus but export controls were also a part to short circuit the involved Congressional budget procedures and in view of the urgency of the problems, the Nunn Lugar legislation provided that an initial sum of \$500 million would be reprogrammed from the enormous Pentagon budget. Easier said than done. Belarus was a special case but Ukraine and Kazakhstan had so many other problems that they hesitated to address SSD. So I guess I was the first one to be asked to do something under Nunn Lugar. Now this was quite apart, Stu, from everything that was going on at the very highest levels including the president and secretary of state to deal with what is going to happen with all of these nuclear weapons and nuclear facilities in the newly independent states. That was all being dealt with separately. Things like export controls, and then later on safe and secure dismantlement of nuclear warheads and nuclear materials. That was all under the Nunn Lugar program. So I put together my team. It had people from DOD, customs, energy, CIA. So we were all ready to go. We sent a telegram to Almaty which was the capital then. The person that was responsible in PM for getting the Nunn Lugar funding called up defense and defense said, "Oh, we are still working on this reprogramming thing. There is no money available now, and we don't know where it is coming from." Imagine the bureaucratic scrounging. Nobody wanting their money reprogrammed. Dan Poneman was on the NSC staff. He followed the PM operations. He was having a meeting to discuss a variety of things. The assistant secretary of defense for international affairs, I think it was Ashton Carter. Have you ever heard of Ash Carter? No, I think. He was from the Kennedy school at Harvard. So I went over to the old executive office building and sat in on this meeting. When Ash Carter got up to go back to the Pentagon, I got up and went out and I said, "Look, we have got a real problem here. We are supposed to carry this thing forward and Kazakhstan is willing. We can't get any money from you." He said, "I will take care of it." And he did. So off we went.

It was a very interesting experience. Here the Soviet Union dissolved. The people in charge were the people; many of them had been running things under Moscow including the president. Here the United States comes in and wants to talk to them about creating export controls. Of course that raised suspicions. Why are the Americans doing this? What is in it for them? What is in it for us and so forth and so on. But they did produce a Kazakh delegation with all the appropriate people.

They had just created their own atomic energy agency with their own Kazakh personnel. Of course there were vast quantities of nuclear material. Ust-Kamenogorsk was the largest factory in the world that produced nuclear materials for reactors. So we explained to them our own system and the fact that they needed to move quickly to set up their own export controls. Our system while it is very effective, it is very cumbersome because of the accumulated regulations that we have. I stressed to them that they should set up something that met their requirements and not necessarily try to duplicate what we were doing. They were very receptive. They had their own fledgling experts there. We spent several days in sessions. Airplane connections in those days were not very frequent, so we wound up at the end with a couple of free days. Somebody said we ought to do a field trip. I said, "Sure, where do you think we ought to go?" "Well let's go to Baikonur, their Kennedy Space Center, or we can ask to go to the Chinese border and see what the export controls are on the Chinese border, or we can ask to go to their nuclear test site at Semipalatinsk." I laughed. "Do you think they will let us go to Semipalatinsk?" So they said, "Well let's ask." The answer came back, "Well no, we are working at Baikonur." They first said yes to the Chinese border, and then they said no, there was a transportation problem. They finally said toward the end of our stay, "You can go to Semipalatinsk." There was a catch though. There were no air connections with the old Aeroflot that would get us to Semipalatinsk and back to Almaty in time for us to get one of the flights back to Frankfurt. My colleagues said, "Let's ask the Department if we can charter a military plane from the Kazakhs to go there." I laughed and said, "That will take weeks to decide." They said, "Well we can ask can't we?" "Yeah, go ahead and send them a telegram." Next morning the answer came back, "Go to the embassy, get \$1500. Charter plane and take your delegation to Semipalatinsk." Off we went. We flew in a modified military plane called a Yak. The Kazakhs met us at the airport and we bussed out to the test site. Drove up to their building and here were the Russian generals with their pie plate hats. "We welcome you to Semipalatinsk on behalf of the President of Kazakhstan." And they were very nice. We drove around through what had been their open air nuclear test area. Our representative from energy was a lady. She said, "This is all a charade. These cows and sheep that are out here eating all this green grass. It is all radioactive. You would never drink any milk or eat any of this flesh." So we then stopped by a door. We all got out and went in, put on the white smocks. They gave us a dosimeter to measure radioactivity. We went down a corridor looking up at a huge reactor, brand new reactor. One member of our delegation was from the Sandia nuclear laboratory. He had nothing to say during the entire time we had been there. Then he started asking questions. "What is the reactor fueled with?" "Well highly enriched uranium. Weapons grade uranium." "How much? When was it put in? What is the reactor used for?" "The Reactor is used for research." So we had a very successful meeting there. We went back and had a nice luncheon. As we were getting ready to leave to be bussed back into town, the Kazakhs came up to us and said, "Mr. Ambassador, would you by any chance have space on your plane for some of our delegation because we can't get a plane back to Almaty today?" I said, "We would love to have you on board." So we had the whole new Kazakhstan nuclear ministry of top officials on our plane. We could talk to them and find out who they were and where they came from. So that started our effort on export controls.

I did give a press conference in the end where I said what all of us believed was the case, that they had no export controls. In Soviet times all the decisions in this whole area were made in Moscow. So they had no export controls as we knew them. They had to develop them. I made this point and it was reported on the front page of the Washington Post, that they had none, and that we had better hurry up with the Nunn Lugar program in dealing with all of the other nuclear successor states. This remark was not taken kindly by the new undersecretary for disarmament, a Miss Lynn Davis from the Rand Corporation. She had replaced Frank Wisner, and PM came under her. She wanted to know who authorized my statement and had the U.S. government determined that this was the case, and why was this statement being made in Almaty. That kicked off a long period of her dissatisfaction with what PM was doing across the board.

Q: Was this just bureaucratic assertiveness or was there something was this a policy issue?

NEWLIN: Not a policy issue. The situation in Kazakhstan was clear to anyone who examined the facts. I cleared my remarks in Almaty with all members of the delegation which included experts from Energy, CIA, the Pentagon and Commerce. Later on in our discussions in Belarus and Kiev we found out the same thing. They said there was no need for any sort of local export controls under the Soviet Union. So therefore when the Soviet Union collapsed all of a sudden, then we had to start scrambling to establish not only export controls but other non proliferation measures. There will be more about Lynn Davis a little bit later maybe. So that was how we got started on that particular thing. A little while later, we got permission to come to Minsk. We were very fortunate the first president of the independent Belarus was quite pro American. Unfortunately, he didn't last too long, but at that time they welcomed us. They admitted they had no effective system. So we explained to them what they had to do. They had to sign an umbrella agreement which among other things required them to sign the NPT and join the IAEA. They were very appreciative and welcoming of what we did. Then the next thing was go to Kiev. So on one of our flights from Frankfurt to Minsk, on the plane with us was Jim Goodby. Jim Goodby was charged with safe and secure dismantlement of nuclear material, SSD. So he was pestering the newly independent nuclear successor states to receive his delegation. He wasn't getting anywhere except in Minsk. We were on a flight to Minsk. I had just received a telegram from Kiev saying Kiev would welcome a visit from Ambassador Newlin to talk about export controls, but unfortunately they are not ready to talk about safe and secure dismantlement. I showed the telegram to Jim Goodby. He said, "Judas." I said, "I have to go. You need to understand, I have to go if they want to see me." So we later went to Kiev several times, and there I was able to finally negotiate the text of an export control agreement with Ukraine which I think was the very first Nunn Lugar agreement. It wasn't finally signed until sometime later together with the SSD package. Then later on export control agreements were signed not only with Belarus but with Kazakhstan and then a similar thing with the Russians in Moscow.

Another major activity I was involved with was the possibility of collaboration with the Russians on launching of U.S. satellites because all of a sudden they had no money to launch satellites. They had all of these huge rockets. So I was able to develop a policy whereby we could launch on their satellites but still secure the technology of our satellites. That was one thing we were able to do. Unexpected problems could pop up. The Russians had developed a unique nuclear power source for their satellites called TOPAZ. NASA persuaded them to ship one to the U.S. for analysis and possible licensing. When we got ready to return it we found there was a regulation prohibiting the export of anything nuclear to Russia. Finally, the lawyers were able to overcome the problem.

Q: Well this is a period of really great cooperation essentially.

NEWLIN: Oh yes, there is no question about it. There was great cooperation. But also under Yeltsin there was great confusion. You didn't know in Moscow who was doing what. They were uncertain themselves. Yeltsin made so many mistakes by turning over huge properties like Gasprom and similar installations to private citizens who just ran them for their own benefit and never paid any taxes. It was a very difficult situation.

Q: Did you have to work when we were dealing with this, I would think it was a touchy time. I mean here a very proud Soviet Union dissolves. I know at the top we made quite an effort not to get into what was known as triumphalism. You know we won the cold war and all of that. With your delegation and all did you have to work so you weren't the victors dictating to the defeated?

NEWLIN: We were very aware of the unsettled situation and we were very circumspect. The cast of relevant officials was constantly changing. I was also then asked to go to Moscow to discuss rules of the road concerning arms sales. At that time Jim Collins was the Charge<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>. He welcomed our delegation to come and do this. I saw the deputy foreign minister. I saw the deputy head of the national security council, and their joint chiefs of staff and the minister of munitions and others. The Russians were very interested. They said that they would like to have an agreement as to what they would sell and what we would sell. In communist times all of the political decisions were made by the Politburo as to what would be sold, they would sell to Egypt; they would sell to Iraq; I guess they would also sell to Castro. Maybe they would give to Castro. But then they would give munitions to people like the Sandinistas in Nicaragua and other places that were self styled freedom fighters. I explained to them that now we have a chance to sell arms in such a way that it would not create bilateral problems but that we could not agree to any sort of divvying up of spheres. We would have to compete on the basis of our product. We were glad to tell them whom we sold to and whom we didn't and to collaborate with them. They finally accepted that. So that was a fascinating time to be there. You had to feel sorry for them because there were times that people that were civil servants weren't getting paid. People were working in factories and weren't getting paid. It was very difficult. We were able to set up an international arms registry in the UN whereby major arms makers would report their sales. This was a major breakthrough on transparency.

Q: Well then what did you do after this.

NEWLIN: Well, I will come back to Lynn Davis. She wanted to get rid of Gallucci. When she first was appointed I briefed her on what I was doing. I introduced her to the arms manufacturers association. I thought we had a very good relationship, but she wanted to replace me too. She made life hell for Gallucci. Every morning E-mails to him well PM has dropped the ball again and this kind of thing.

Q: Did you get a feeling I mean what was her background?

NEWLIN: She came from the Rand Corporation. I don't know, she must have had a background in Rand in disarmament and that kind of thing. But when she was first nominated she was very careful. Gallucci would have her come to high level staff meetings where we were discussing policy. She would attend and just sit there, but she would never indicate what her views were because she didn't want people on Capitol Hill thinking she was trying to perform her official duties when she hadn't been confirmed. But then once she was confirmed, she really made life hell for Gallucci. I give Bob credit. I think he tried to argue with her that I was doing a good job with this new thing. But she finally wanted to replace me with one of her friends who might have been at Rand too.

Q: Did you, I mean I am trying to pick up here something that sometimes happens. That is somebody who has earned their credentials essentially in a think tank or the academic world. When they arrive in government all of a sudden it is no longer just you know up in the air thinking about things. I mean they have got real people doing real things. Whereas often in the academic world.

NEWLIN: You produce papers.

Q: Well you do papers but also there are kind of sharp elbows. You want to get your idea across, and these are ideas. Did you have a feeling that this was in play or was there more to it.

NEWLIN: No, I think it was strictly personnel. I mean we had to report to her because PM came under her jurisdiction. I think she first didn't like the report from Almaty that the newly independent states didn't have export controls. She didn't like that statement being made. To be made, it ought to be made by her in the context of the Washington scene. Then she took great exception to the fact that I had gone to Moscow to talk about rules of the road. She thought that was something she ought to be doing herself. So I then left the State Department, retired again.

Q: When was that?

NEWLIN: That would have been in 1994. So when I left Jim Leonard, whom you know I am sure, called me up and said, "Would I join something called the lawyers alliance for world security, LAWS?" I did join them working on non-proliferation projects. I also then joined a firm called Jupiter Corporation. Jupiter Corporation worked closely with energy on nuclear matters. John Rooney was in charge of international affairs in energy. He recruited me from Jupiter to work with him on laboratory to laboratory negotiations with the Russians. The Kurchatov Institute in Moscow was the Soviet Union's Los Alamos. All of their early nuclear development took place there including their first reactor. We had several delegations, and met with Rooney's opposite numbers in rundown buildings just outside the Kurchatov Institute. The delegations also had representatives from Los Alamos and Sandia national laboratories. Finally they were so desperate for money and funding that we were allowed into the Kurchatov Institute itself and met with the director. We were able to then set up the beginnings. They needed help. I tell you the difference between Los Alamos and the Kurchatov Institute was amazing, everything in Moscow was run down with holes in the perimeter fence and everything. They had all sorts of nuclear material there, but they didn't know how much they had and where it was. So we were able to sign agreements with them and get started.

Q: Was that bringing in money to them?

NEWLIN: Yes, and then helping them also. We were able to get funding to upgrade their security. The national laboratory people wanted to bring in all of this high tech stuff from the United States. I said, "Well why don't we try to the extent we can to get the Russians themselves to build their security system." "No, no, we have got to get this done quickly." We then got permission to bring our Russian counterparts from Kurchatov to Los Alamos. That was a big deal indeed, to let Russians come in. But it all had to be under security of course. They couldn't be shown anything classified. We couldn't get them into Sandia, but we got them into Los Alamos. So that was it. What happened was that the national laboratories said "Well why should we let Washington and Rooney run this program. We are the ones that are the actors here. So we will take it over." However, it was Rooney's initiatives in the early stages that led to the breakthrough. If during the Cold War someone told me one day I would enter Semipalatinsk and Kurchatov Institute I would have said they were crazy.

Q: National laboratories are what?

NEWLIN: National laboratories consist of Los Alamos, nearby Sandia. Los Alamos was where the first nuclear bombs were developed. Sandia was a big place where a lot of nuclear weapons stuff goes on. Hanford, Washington, and then Oak Ridge in Tennessee. Then Argonne in Chicago is mainly for peaceful purposes. They don't have anything on weapons but they do peaceful nuclear research. So then that meant that finally things dried up there, and there was no more contracts to be had. So then LAWS continued, since it was a non governmental agency and privately funded. They then put together some delegations and we went and followed up then on other things we had done. I have here an agreement that we signed in Minsk. This was the LAWS Delegation.

Q: Yes, when the time comes, we can include this in.

NEWLIN: All of this is outside being funded by the Department of State. But when the government of Belarus sent this to their parliament for adoption they said this law, draft law has been drafted with the cooperation of the United States. So this is just a follow on to what we had done earlier. Finally when I left PM, this is what Bob Gallucci presented at my farewell reception.

Q: Oh yes, the superior honor award.

For the effective promoting of arms transfer policies and persuasive and persistent work at the forum for security cooperation, the conference on disarmament and in Russia, the Czech Republic and Hungary, in helping conclude a precedent setting technological safeguards agreement for satellite launches with Russia. Michael Newlin contributed to harmonizing the seemingly opposing objectives of protecting new technology while promoting increased cooperation in space with Russia. His efforts and accomplishments are sincerely appreciated by his colleagues and his country. February, 1994. Very good.

NEWLIN: Very nice.

Q: Well it does show you the culmination of what you were doing. It shows that not only is there a life after retirement, but an extremely productive accomplishment.

NEWLIN: I really felt that I was doing something entirely new. This was an opportunity to work with former enemies, with whom we developed friendships, on critically important projects.

Q: It was a window that had just opened up.

NEWLIN: Correct. It was the new world.

Q: The window was kind of closed but an awful lot of that cooperation remained.

NEWLIN: So that was it. Q: Well Mike this has been a fascinating time, and I really want to thank you.

NEWLIN: Well I need to thank you for your interest and your willingness to stick with this, Stu.

Q: How did Lynn Davis do later on?

NEWLIN: I don't know. She didn't bulk very large on the Washington scene. The one that got all the publicity and everything was Gallucci. He went to North Korea. I told him, "You have achieved everything. Here you are an assistant secretary of state. You go off and deal with one of the most difficult governments in the world. You achieve agreement. You come back to Washington. You go over to the White House and the President announces to the press, 'Here is Bob Gallucci. He will tell you about it.'" I would like very much now that we are finished this operation to invite you to have lunch with me at the Cosmos Club.

End of interview